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THE MYSTERY

OF

EDWIN DROOD.

CHAPTER I

THE DAWN

A N ancient English Cathedral Tower How can the mount English Cathedral Tower be here! The well-I now massive grey square tower of its old Cathedral? How can that be here! There is no spike of rusty iron in the air, between the eye and it, from any point of the real prospect What is the spike that intervenes, and who has Maybe it is set up by the Sultan's orders for the impaling of a horde of Turkish robbers, one by one It is so, for cymbals clash and the Sultan goes by to his palace in long procession Ten thousand scimitars flash in the sunlight, and thrice ten thousand dancing-girls strew Then, follow white elephants caparisoned in countless gorgeous colours, and infinite in number and attendants Still the Cathedral Tower rises in the background, where it cannot be, and still no writhing figure is on the grim spike Stay! Is the spike so low a thing as the rusty spike on the top of a post of an old bedstead that has tumbled all awry? Some vague period of drowsy laughter must be devoted to the consideration of this possibility

Shaking from head to foot, the man whose scattered consciousness has thus fantastically pieced itself together,

at length rises, supports his trembling frame upon his arms, and looks around. He is in the meanest and closest of small rooms. Through the ragged window-curtain, the light of early day steals in from a miserable court. He lies, dressed, across a large unseemly bed, upon a bedstead that has indeed given way under the weight upon it. Lying, also dressed and also across the bed, not longwise, are a Chinaman, a Lascar, and a haggard woman. The two first are in a sleep or stupor, the last is blowing at a kind of pipe, to kindle it. And as she blows, and shading it with her lean hand, concentrates its red spark of light, it serves in the dim morning as a lamp to show him what he sees of her

"Another" says this woman, in a querulous, rattling

whisper "Have another?"

He looks about him, with his hand to his forehead

"Ye've smoked as many as five since ye come in at midnight," the woman goes on, as she chronically complains "Poor me, poor me, my head is so bad Them two come in after ye Ah, poor me, the business is slack, is slack! Few Chinamen about the Docks, and fewer Lascars, and no ships coming in, these say! Here's another ready for ye, deary Ye'll remember like a good soul, won't ye, that the market price is dreffle high just now? More nor three shillings and sixpence for a thimbleful! And ye'll remember that nobody but me (and Jack Chinamañ t'other side the court, but he can't do it as well as me) has the true secret of mixing it? Ye'll pay up according, deary, won't ye?"

She blows at the pipe as she speaks, and, occasionally

bubbling at it, inhales much of its contents

"Oh me, Oh me, my lungs is weak, my lungs is bad! It's nearly ready for ye, deary Ah, poor me, poor me, my poor hand shakes like to drop off! I see ye coming-to, and I ses to my poor self, 'I'll have another ready for him, and he'll bear in mind the market price of opium, and pay according' Oh my poor head! I makes my pipes of old penny ink bottles, ye see, deary—this is one—and I fits in a mouthpiece, this way and I takes my mixter out of this thimble with this little horn spoon, and so I fills, deary.

Ah, my poor nerves! I got Heavens-hard drunk for sixteen year afore I took to this, but this don't hurt me, not to speak of And it takes away the hunger as well as wittles, deary"

She hands him the nearly-emptied pipe, and sinks back,

turning over on her face

He rises unsteadily from the bed, lays the pipe upon the hearth-stone, draws back the ragged curtain, and looks with repugnance at his three companions. He notices that the woman has opium-smoked herself into a strange likeness of the Chinaman. His form of cheek, eye, and temple, and his colour are repeated in her. Said Chinaman convulsively wrestles with one of his many Gods or Devils, perhaps, and snarls horribly. The Lascar laughs and dribbles at the mouth.

"What visions can she have?" the waking man muses, as he turns her face towards him, and stands looking down at it. "Visions of many butchers' shops, and public-houses, and much credit? Of an increase of hideous customers, and this horrible bedstead set upright again, and this horrible court swept clean? What can she rise to, under any quantity of opium, higher than that!—Eh?"

He bends down his ear, to listen to her mutterings

"Unintelligible!"

As he watches the spasmodic shoots and darts that break out of her face and limbs, like fitful lightning out of a dark sky, some contagion in them seizes upon him. insomuch that he has to withdraw himself to a lean armchair by the hearth—placed there, perhaps, for such emergencies—and to sit in it, holding tight, until he has got the better of this unclean spirit of imitation

Then he comes back, pounces on the Chinaman, and seizing him with both hands by the throat, turns him violently on the bed The Chinaman clutches the aggressive

hands, resists, gasps, and protests

"What do you say "

A watchful pause "Unintelligible'"

Slowly loosening his grasp as he listens to the mecherent jargon with an attentive frown, he turns to the Lascar and fairly drags him forth upon the floor As he falls, the Lascar starts into a half-risen attitude, glares with his eyes, lashes about him fiercely with his arms, and draws a phantom knife. It then becomes apparent that the woman has taken possession of this knife, for safety's sake, for, she too starting up, and restraining and expostulating with him, the knife is visible in her dress, not in his, when they drowsily drop back, side by side. There has been chattering and clattering enough between them, but to no purpose. When any distinct word has been fluing into the air, it has had no sense or sequence. Wherefore "unintelligible!" is again the comment of the watcher, made with some reassured nodding of his head, and a gloomy smile. He then lays certain silver money

and a gloomy smile He then lays certain silver money on the table, finds his hat, gropes his way down the broken stairs, gives a good-morning to some rat-ridden doorkeeper, in bed in a black hutch beneath the stairs, and passes out

That same afternoon, the massive grey square tower of an old Cathedral rises before the sight of a jaded traveller The bells are going for daily vesper service, and he must needs attend it, one would say, from his haste to reach the open cathedral door. The choir are getting on their sullied white robes, in a hurry, when he arrives among them, gets on his own robe, and falls into the procession filing in to service. Then, the Sacristan locks the iron-barred gates that divide the sanctuary from the chancel, and all of the procession having scuttled into their places, hide their faces, and then the intoned words, "WHEN THE WICKED MAN——" rise among groins of arches and beams of roof, awakening muttered thunder

CHAPTER II

A DEAN, AND A CHAPTER ALSO

Whosoever has observed that sedate and clerical bird, the rook, may perhaps have noticed that when he wings

his way homeward towards nightfall, in a sedate and clerical company, two rooks will suddenly detach themselves from the rest, will retrace their flight for some distance, and will there poise and linger, conveying to mere men the fancy that it is of some occult importance to the body politic, that this artful couple should pretend to have renounced connection with it

Similarly, service being over in the old cathedral with the square tower, and the choir scuffling out again, and divers venerable persons of rook-like aspect dispersing, two of these latter retrace their steps, and walk together in the echoing Close

Not only is the day waning, but the year The low sun is fiery and yet cold behind the monastery ruin, and the Virginia creeper on the cathedral wall has showered half its deep-red leaves down on the pavement There has been rain this afternoon, and a wintry shudder goes among the little pools on the cracked uneven flag-stones, and through the giant elm-trees as they shed a gust of tears Their fallen leaves he strewn thickly about Some of these leaves, in a timid rush, seek sanctuary within the low arched cathedral door, but two men coming out resist them, and cast them forth again with their feet, this done, one of the two locks the door with a goodly key, and the other flits away with a folio music-book

"Mr Jasper was that, Tope?"

"Yes, Mr Dean"
"He has staved late"

"Yes, Mr Dean I have stayed for him, your Rever-

ence He has been took a little poorly"

"Say 'taken,' Tope—to the Dean," the younger rook interposes in a low tone with this touch of correction, as who should say "You may offer bad grammar to the laity, or the humbler clergy, not to the Dean"

Mr. Tope, Chief Verger and Showman, and accustomed to be high with excursion parties, declines with a silent loftiness to perceive that any suggestion has been tendered

to him

"And when and how has Mr Jasper been taken—for, as Mr Crisparkle has remarked, it is better to say taken."

-taken-" repeats the Dean, "when and how has Mr. Jasper been Taken-"

"Taken, sır," Tope deferentially murmurs

"Poorly, Tope?"

"Why, sir, Mr Jasper was that breathed-"

"I wouldn't say 'That breathed,' Tope," Mr Crisparkle interposes with the same touch as before "Not English—to the Dean"

"Breathed to that extent," the Dean (not unflattered by this indirect homage) condescendingly remarks, "would be

preferable"

"Mr Jasper's breathing was so remarkably short"—thus discreetly does Mr Tope work his way round the sunken rock—"when he came in, that it distressed him mightily to get his notes out, which was perhaps the cause of his having a kind of fit on him after a little His memory grew Dazed" Mr Tope, with his eyes on the Reverend Mr Crisparkle, shoots this word out, as defying him to improve upon it "and a dimness and giddiness crept over him as strange as ever I saw though he didn't seem to mind it particularly, himself However, a little time and a little water brought him out of his Daze" Mr Tope repeats the word and its emphasis, with the air of saying "As I have made a success, I'll make it again"

"And Mr Jasper has gone home quite himself, has

he?" asked the Dean

"Your Reverence, he has gone home quite himself And I'm glad to see he's having his fire kindled up, for it's chilly after the wet, and the Cathedral had both a damp feel and a damp touch this afternoon, and he was

very shivery "

They all three look towards an old stone gatehouse crossing the Close, with an arched thoroughfare passing beneath it Through its latticed window, a fire shines out upon the fast-darkening scene, involving in shadow the pendent masses of ivy and creeper covering the building's front. As the deep Cathedral-bell strikes the hour, a ripple of wind goes through these at their distance, like a ripple of the solemn sound that hums through tomb and

tower, broken niche and defaced statue, in the pile close at hand

"Is Mr Jasper's nephew with him?" the Dean asks

"No, sir," replied the Verger, "but expected There's his own solitary shadow betwirt his two windows—the one looking this way, and the one looking down into the High

Street—drawing his own curtains now "

"Well, well," says the Dean, with a sprightly air of breaking up the little conference, "I hope Mr. Jasper's heart may not be too much set upon his nephew Our affections, however laudable, in this transitory world, should never master us, we should guide them, guide them I find I am not disagreeably reminded of my dinner, by hearing my dinner-bell Perhaps, Mr Crisparkle, you will, before going home, look in on Jasper?"

"Certainly, Mr Dean And tell him that you had the

kindness to desire to know how he was?"

"Ay, do so, do so Certainly Wished to know how he was By all means Wished to know how he was"

With a pleasant air of patronage, the Dean as nearly cocks his quaint hat as a Dean in good spirits may, and directs his comely gaiters towards the ruddy dining-room of the snug old red-brick house where he is at present "in residence" with Mrs Dean and Miss Dean

Mr Crisparkle, Minor Canon, fair and rosy, and perpetually pitching himself head-foremost into all the deep running water in the surrounding country, Mr Crisparkle, Minor Canon, early riser, musical, classical, cheerful, kind, good-natured, social, contented, and boy-like, Mr Crisparkle, Minor Canon and good man, lately "Coach" upon the chief Pagan high roads, but since promoted by a patron (grateful for a well-taught son) to his present Christian beat, betakes himself to the gatehouse, on his way home to his early tea

"Sorry to hear from Tope that you have not been well,

Jasper "

"Oh, it was nothing, nothing!"

"You look a little worn"

"Do I? Oh, I don't think so What is better, I don't feel so. Tope has made too much of it, I suspect It's

his trade to make the most of everything appertaining to the Cathedral, you know"

"I may tell the Dean-I call expressly from the Dean

-that you are all right again?"

The reply, with a slight smile, is "Certainly, with my respects and thanks to the Dean"

"I'm glad to hear that you expect young Drood"

"I expect the dear fellow every moment"

"Ah! He will do you more good than a doctor, Jasper"

"More good than a dozen doctors For I love him

dearly, and I don't love doctors, or doctors' stuff"

Mr Tasper is a dark man of some six-and-twenty, with thick, lustrous, well-arranged black hair and whiskers He looks older than he is, as dark men often do His voice is deep and good, his face and figure are good, his manner is a little sombre. His room is a little sombre, and may have had its influence in forming his manner. It is mostly in shadow Even when the sun shines brilliantly, it seldom touches the grand piano in the recess, or the folio musicbooks on the stand, or the book-shelves on the wall, or the unfinished picture of a blooming schoolgirl hanging over the chimney-piece, her flowing brown hair tied with a blue riband, and her beauty remarkable for a quite childish, almost babyish, touch of saucy discontent, comically conscious of itself (There is not the least artistic merit in this picture, which is a mere daub, but it is clear that the painter has made it humorously-one might almost say, revengefully—like the original)

"We shall miss you, Jasper, at the 'Alternate Musical Wednesdays' to-night, but no doubt you are best at home Good-night God bless you! 'Tell me, shep-herds, te-e-ell me, tell me-e-e, have you seen (have you seen, have you seen) my-y-y Flo-o-ora-a pass this way!'" Melodiously good Minor Canon the Reverend Septimus Crisparkle thus delivers himself, in musical rhythm, as he withdraws his amiable face from the doorway and conveys it downstairs Sounds of recognition and greeting pass between the Reverend Septimus and somebody else, at the stair-foot Mr Jasper listens, starts from his chair, and

catches a young fellow in his arms, exclaiming -

"My dear Edwin!"

'My dear Jack! So glad to see you!"

"Get off your greatcoat, bright boy, and sit down here in your own corner Your feet are not wet? Pull your boots off Do pull your boots off"

"My dear Jack, I am as dry as a bone Don't moddley-coddley, there's a good fellow I like anything better than

being moddley-coddleyed "

With the check upon him of being unsympathetically restrained in a genial outburst of enthusiasm, Mr Jasper stands still, and looks on intently at the young fellow, divesting himself of his outward coat, hat, gloves, and so foith. Once for all, a look of intentness and intensity—a look of hungry, exacting, watchful, and yet devoted affection—is always, now and ever afterwards, on the Jasper face whenever the Jasper face is addressed in this direction. And whenever it is so addressed, it is never, on this occasion or on any other, dividedly addressed, it is always concentrated.

"Now I am right, and now I'll take my corner, Jack

Any dinner, Jack 5"

Mr Jasper opens a door at the upper end of the room, and discloses a small inner room pleasantly lighted and prepared, wherein a comely dame is in the act of setting dishes on table

"What a jolly old Jack it is!" cries the young fellow, with a clap of his hands "Look here, Jack, tell me, whose birthday is it?"

"Not yours, I know," Mr Jasper answers, pausing to

consider

"Not mine, you know? No, not mine, I know! Pussy's!"
Fixed as the look the young fellow meets is, there is yet in it some strange power of suddenly including the sketch over the chimney-piece

"Pussy's, Jack We must drink Many happy returns to her Come, uncle, take your dutiful and sharp-set

nephew in to dinner"

As the boy (for he is little more) lays a hand on Jasper's shoulder, Jasper cordially and gaily lays a hand on his shoulder, and so Marseillaise-wise they go in to dinner

"And Lord! here's Mrs Tope!" cries the boy "Loveher then ever!"

"Never you mind me, Master Edwin," retorts the Verger's

wife, "I can take care of myself"

"You can't You're much too handsome Give me a

kiss because its Pussy's birthday"

"I'd Pussy you, young man, if I was Pussy, as you call her," Mrs Tope blushingly retorts, after being saluted "Your uncle's too much wrapt up in you, that's where it is He makes so much of you, that it's my opinion you think you've only to call your Pussys by the dozen, to make 'em come"

"You forget, Mrs Tope," Mr Jasper interposes, taking his place at the table with a genial smile, "and so do you, Ned, that Uncle and Nephew are words prohibited here by common consent and express agreement For what we are going to receive His holy name be praised!"

"Done like the Dean! Witness, Edwin Drood! Please

to carve, Jack, for I can't"

This sally ushers in the dinner Little to the present purpose, or to any purpose, is said, while it is in course of being disposed of At length the cloth is drawn, and a dish of walnuts and a decanter of rich-coloured sherry are placed upon the table

"I say! Tell me, Jack," the young fellow then flows on. "do you really and truly feel as if the mention of our

relationship divided us at all? I don't "

"Uncles as a rule, Ned, are so much older than their nephews," is the reply, "that I have that feeling instinc-

tively "

"As a rule! Ah, maybe! But what is a difference in age of half-a dozen years or so? And some uncles, in large families, are even younger than their nephews By George, I wish it was the case with us!"

" Why?"

"Because if it was, I'd take the lead with you, Jack, and be as wise as Begone, dull Care! that turned a young man grey, and Begone, dull Care! that turned an old man to clay—Halloa, Jack Don't drink"

"Why not?"

"Asks why not, on Pussy's birthday, and no Happy returns proposed! Pussy, Jack, and many of 'em! Happy returns, I mean"

Laying an affectionate and laughing touch on the boy's extended hand, as if it were at once his giddy head and his

light heart, Mr Jasper drinks the toast in silence

"Hip, hip, hip, and nine times nine, and one to finish with, and all that, understood Hooray, hooray, hooray!

—And now, Jack, let's have a little talk about Pussy Two pairs of nut-crackers? Pass me one, and take the other "Crack "How's Pussy getting on, Jack?"

"With her music? Fairly"

"What a dreadfully conscientious fellow you are, Jack! But I know, Lord bless you! Inattentive, isn't she?"

"She can learn anything, if she will"

"If she will! Egad, that's it But if she won't?"

Crack!—on Mr Jasper's part "How's she looking, Jack?"

Mr Jasper's concentrated face again includes the portrait as he returns "Very like your sketch indeed"

"I am a little proud of it," says the young fellow, glancing up at the sketch with complacency, and then shutting one eye, and taking a corrected prospect of it over a level bridge of nut-crackers in the air. "Not badly hit off from memory But I ought to have caught that expression pretty well, for I have seen-it often enough."

Crack!—on Edwin Drood's part Crack!—on Mr Jasper's part

"In point of fact," the former resumes, after some silent dipping among his fragments of walnut with an air of pique, "I see it whenever I go to see Pussy If I don't find it on her face, I leave it there —You know I do, Miss Scornful Pert Booh!" With a twirl of the nut-crackers at the portrait.

Crack! crack! crack Slowly, on Mr Jasper's part

Crack Sharply on the part of Edwin Drood.

Silence on both sides

"Have you lost your tongue, Jack?"
"Have you found yours, Ned?"

"No, but really—isn't it, you know, after all—"
Mr Jasper lifts his dark eyebrows inquiringly.

'Isn't it unsatisfactory to be cut off from choice in such a matter? There, Jack! I tell you! If I could choose, I would choose Pussy from all the pretty girls in the world"

"But you have not got to choose"

"That's what I complain of My dead and gone father and Pussy's dead and gone father must needs marry us together by anticipation Why the—Devil, I was going to say, if it had been respectful to their memory—couldn't they leave us alone?"

"Tut, tut, dear boy," Mr Jasper remonstrates, in a tone

of gentle deprecation

Tut, tut? Yes, Jack, it's all very well for you You can take it easily Your life is not laid down to scale, and lined and dotted out for you like a surveyor's plan You have no uncomfortable suspicion that you are forced upon anybody, nor has anybody an uncomfortable suspicion that she is forced upon you, or that you are forced upon her You can choose for yourself Life, for you, is a plum with the natural bloom on, it hasn't been over-carefully wiped off for you—"

"Don't stop, dear fellow Go on"

"Can I anyhow have hurt your feelings, Jack?"

"How can you have hurt my feelings?"

"Good Heaven, Jack, you look frightfully ill! There's strange film come over your eyes"

Mr Jasper, with a forced smile, stretches out his right hand, as if at once to disarm apprehension and gain time

to get better After a while he says faintly -

"I have been taking opium for a pain—an agony—that sometimes overcomes me The effects of the medicine steal over me like a blight or a cloud, and pass You see them in the act of passing, they will be gone directly Look away from me They will go all the sooner"

With a scared face the younger man complies by casting his eyes downward at the ashes on the hearth. Not relaxing his own gaze on the fire, but rather strengthening it with a fierce, firm grip upon his elbow-chair, the elder sits for a few moments rigid, and then, with thick drops standing on his forehead, and a sharp catch of his breath, becomes as he was before. On his so subsiding in his chair,

his nephew gently and assiduously tends him while he quite recovers When Jasper is restored, he lays a tender hand upon his nephew's shoulder, and, in a tone of voice less troubled than the purport of his words-indeed with something of raillery or banter in it—thus addresses him —

"There is said to be a hidden skeleton in every house, but you thought there was none in mine, dear Ned"

"Upon my life, Jack, I did think so However, when I

come to consider that even in Pussy's house-if she had one-and in mine-if I had one-

"You were going to say (but that I interrupted you in spite of myself) what a quiet life mine is No whirl and uproar around me, no distracting commerce or calculation, no risk, no change of place, myself devoted to the art I

pursue, my business my pleasure"

"I really was going to say something of the kind, Jack, but you see, you, speaking of yourself, almost necessarily leave out much that I should have put in For instance I should have put in the foreground your being so much respected as Lay Precentor, or Lay Clerk, or whatever you call it, of this Cathedral, your enjoying the reputation of having done such wonders with the choir, your choosing your society, and holding such an independent position in this queer old place, your gift of teaching (why, even Pussy, who don't like being taught, says there never was such a Master as you are!), and your connection "

"Yes, I saw what you were tending to I hate it"

"Hate it, Jack?" (Much bewildered)

"I hate it The cramped monotony of my existence grinds me away by the grain How does our service sound to you?"

"Beautiful! Quite celestial!"

"It often sounds to me quite devilish I am so weary of it The echoes of my own voice among the arches seem to mock me with my daily drudging round No wretched monk who droned his life away in that gloomy place, before me, can have been more tired of it than I am. He could take for relief (and did take) to carving demons out of the stalls and seats and desks What shall I do? Must I take to carving them out of my heart?"

"I thought you had so exactly found your niche in life, Jack," Edwin Drood returns, astonished, bending forward in his chair to lay a sympathetic hand on Jasper's knee, and looking at him with an anxious face

"I know you thought so They all think so"

"Well, I suppose they do," says Edwin, meditating aloud "Pussy thinks so"

"When did she tell you that?"

"The last time I was here You remember when Three months ago"

"How did she phrase it?"

"Oh, she only said that she had become your pupil, and that you were made for your vocation"

The younger man glances at the portrait The elder

sees it in him

"Anyhow, my dear Ned," Jasper resumes, as he shakes his head with a grave cheerfulness, "I must subdue myself to my vocation which is much the same thing outwardly It's too late to find another now This is a confidence between us"

"It shall be sacredly preserved, Jack"

"I have reposed it in you, because-"

"I feel it, I assure you Because we are fast friends, and because you love and trust me, as I love and trust you Both hands, Jack"

As each stands looking into the other's eyes, and as the uncle holds the nephew's hands, the uncle thus proceeds —

"You know now, don't you, that even a poor monotonous chorister and grinder of music—in his niche—may be troubled with some stray sort of ambition, aspiration, restlessness, dissatisfaction, what shall we call it?"

"Yes, dear Jack"

And you will remember?"

"My dear Jack, I only ask you, am I likely to forget what you have said with so much feeling?"

"Take it as a warning, then"

In the act of having his hands released, and of moving a step back, Edwin pauses for an instant to consider the application of these last words

The instant over, he says, sensibly touched.—

"I am afraid I am but a shallow, surface kind of a fellow, Jack, and that my headpiece is none of the best. But I needn't say I am young, and perhaps I shall not grow worse as I grow older. At all events, I hope I have something impressible within me, which feels—deeply feels—the disinterestedness of your painfully laying your inner self bare, as a warning to me."

Mr Jasper's steadiness of face and figure becomes so

marvellous that his breathing seems to have stopped

"I couldn't fail to notice, Jack, that it cost you a great effort, and that you were very much moved, and very unlike your usual self Of course I knew that you were extremely fond of me, but I really was not prepared for your, as I may say, sacrificing yourself to me in that way"

Mr Jasper, becoming a breathing man again without the smallest stage of transition between the two extreme states, lifts his shoulders, laughs, and waves his right arm

"No, don't put the sentiment away, Jack, please don't, for I am very much in earnest I have no doubt that that unhealthy state of mind which you have so powerfully described is attended with some real suffering, and is hard to bear But let me reassure you, Jack, as to the chances of its overcoming me I don't think I am in the way of In some few months less than another year, you know, I shall carry Pussy off from school as Mrs Edwin Drood I shall then go engineering into the East, and Pussy with And although we have our little tiffs now, arising out of a certain unavoidable flatness that attends our lovemaking, owing to its end being all settled beforehand, still I have no doubt of our getting on capitally then, when it's done and can't be helped In short, Jack, to go back to the old song I was freely quoting at dinner (and who knows old songs better than you?), my wife shall dance, and I will sing, so merrily pass the day Of Pussy's being beautiful there cannot be a doubt,—and when you are good besides, Little Miss Impudence," once more apostrophiz ing the portrait, "I'll burn your comic likeness, and paint your music-master another "

Mr Jasper, with his hand to his chin, and with an expression of musing benevolence on his face, has atten-

tively watched every animated look and gesture attending the delivery of these words He remains in that attitude after they are spoken, as if in a kind of fascination attendant on his strong interest in the youthful spirit that he loves so well Then he says with a quiet smile —

"You won't be warned, then?"

"No, Jack"

"You can't be warned, then?"

"No, Jack, not by you Besides that I don't really consider myself in danger, I don't like your putting yourself in that position"

"Shall we go and walk in the churchyard?"

"By all means You won't mind my slipping out of it for half a moment to the Nuns' House, and leaving a parcel there? Only gloves for Pussy, as many pairs of gloves as she is years old to-day Rather poetical, Jack?"

Mr Jasper, still in the same attitude, murmurs "'Noth-

ing half so sweet in life,' Ned!"

"Here's the parcel in my greatcoat pocket be presented to-night, or the poetry is gone It's against regulations for me to call at night, but not to leave a packet I am ready, Jack!"

Mr Jasper dissolves his attitude, and they go out

together.

CHAPTER III.

THE NUNS' HOUSE.

For sufficient reasons, which this narrative will itself unfold as it advances, a fictitious name must be bestowed upon the old Cathedral town. Let it stand in these pages as Cloisterham. It was once possibly known to the Druids by another name, and certainly to the Romans by another, and to the Saxons by another, and to the Norman's by another, and a name more or less in the course of many centuries can be of little moment to its dusty chronicles

An ancient city, Cloisterham, and no meet dwellingplace for any one with hankerings after the noisy world A monotonous, silent city, deriving an earthy flavour throughout from its Cathedral crypt, and so abounding in vestiges of monastic graves, that the Cloisterham children grow small salad in the dust of abbots and abbesses, and make dirt-pies of nuns and friars, while every ploughman in its outlying fields renders to once puissant Lord Treasurers, Archbishops, Bishops, and such-like, the attention which the Ogre in the story-book desired to render to his unbidden visitor, and grinds their bones to make his bread

A drowsy city, Cloisterham, whose inhabitants seem to suppose, with an inconsistency more strange than rare, that all its changes lie behind it, and that there are no more A queer moral to derive from antiquity, yet older than any traceable antiquity. So silent are the streets of Cloisterham (though prone to echo on the smallest provocation), that of a summer-day the sunblinds of its shops scarce dare to flap in the south wind, while the sunbrowned tramps, who pass along and stare, quicken their limp a little, that they may the sooner get beyond the confines of its oppressive respectability. This is a feat not difficult of achievement, seeing that the streets of Cloisterham city are little more than one narrow street by which you get into it and get out of it the rest being mostly disappointing yards with pumps in them and no thoroughfare exception made of the Cathedral-close, and a paved Quaker settlement, in colour and general conformation very like a Quakeress's bonnet, up in a shady corner

In a word a city of another and a bygone time is Cloister-ham, with its hoarse Cathedral bell, its hoarse rooks hovering about the Cathedral tower, its hoarser and less distinct rooks in the stalls far beneath. Fragments of old wall, saint's chapel, chapter-house, convent and monastery, have got incongruously or obstructively built into many of its houses and gardens, much as kindred jumbled notions have become incorporated into many of its citizens' minds. All things in it are of the past. Even its single pawnbroker takes in no pledges, nor has he for a long time, but offers vainly an unredeemed stock for sale, of which the costlier articles are dim and pale old watches apparently in a slow perspiration, tarnished sugar-tongs with ineffectual legs,

and odd volumes of dismal books. The most abundant and the most agreeable evidences of progressing life in Cloisterham are the evidences of vegetable life in many gardens, even its drooping and despondent little theatre has its poor strip of garden, receiving the foul fiend, when he ducks from its stage into the infernal regions, among scarletbeans or oyster-shells, according to the season of the year

In the midst of Cloisterham stands the Nuns' House a venerable brick edifice, whose present appellation is doubtless derived from the legend of its conventual uses. On the trim gate enclosing its old courtyard is a resplendent brass plate flashing forth the legend "Seminary for Young Ladies Miss Twinkleton" The house-front is so old and worn, and the brass plate is so shining and staring, that the general result has reminded imaginative strangers of a battered old beau with a large modern eye-glass stuck in his blind eye

Whether the nuns of yore, being of a submissive rather than a stiff-necked generation, habitually bent their contemplative heads to avoid collision with the beams in the low ceilings of the many chambers of their House, whether they sat in its long low windows telling their beads for their mortification, instead of making necklaces of them for their adornment, whether they were ever walled up alive in odd angles and jutting gables of the building for having some ineradicable leaven of busy mother Nature in them which has kept the fermenting world alive ever since, these may be matters of interest to its haunting ghost (if any), but constitute no item in Miss Twinkleton's half-yearly accounts They are neither of Miss Twinkleton's inclusive regulars, nor of her extras The lady who undertakes the poetical department of the establishment at so much (or so little) a quarter has no pieces in her list of recitals bearing on such unprofitable questions

As, in some cases of drunkenness, and in others of animal magnetism, there are two states of consciousness which never clash, but each of which pursues its separate course as though it were continuous instead of broken (thus, if I hide my watch when I am drunk, I must be drunk again before I can remember where), so Miss Twinkleton

has two distinct and separate phases of being Every night, the moment the young ladies have retired to rest, does Miss Twinkleton smarten up her curls a little, brighten up her eyes a little, and become a sprightlier Miss Twinkleton than the young ladies have ever seen Every night, at the same hour, does Miss Twinkleton resume the topics of the previous night, comprehending the tenderer scandal of Cloisterham, of which she has no knowledge whatever by day, and references to a certain season at Tunbridge Wells (airily called by Miss Twinkleton in this state of her existence "The Wells"), notably the season wherein a certain finished gentleman (compassionately called by Miss Twinkleton, in this stage of her existence, "Foolish Mr Porters") revealed a homage of the heart, whereof Miss Twinkleton, in her scholastic state of existence, is as ignorant as a granite pillar Miss Twinkleton's companion in both states of existence, and equally adaptable to either, is one Mrs Tisher, a deferential widow with a weak back, a chronic sigh, and a suppressed voice, who looks after the young ladies' wardrobes, and leads them to infer that she has seen better days Perhaps this is the reason why it is an article of faith with the servants, handed down from race to race, that the departed Tisher was a hairdresser

The pet pupil of the Nuns' House is Miss Rosa Bud, of course called Rosebud, wonderfully pretty, wonderfully childish, wonderfully whimsical An awkward interest (awkward because romantic) attaches to Miss Bud in the minds of the young ladies, on account of its being known to them that a husband has been chosen for her by will and bequest, and that her guardian is bound down to bestow her on that husband when he comes of age Miss Twinkleton, in her seminarial state of existence, has combated the romantic aspect of this destiny by affecting to shake her head over it behind Miss Bud's dimpled shoulders, and to brood on the unhappy lot of that doomed little victim But with no better effect—possibly some unfelt touch of foolish Mr Porters has undermined the endeavour—than to evoke from the young ladies an unanimous bedchamber cry of "Oh, what a pretending old thing Miss Twinkleton is, my dear!"

The Nuns' House is never in such a state of flutter as when this allotted husband calls to see little Rosebud is unanimously understood by the young ladies that he is lawfully entitled to this privilege, and that if Miss Twinkleton disputed it, she would be instantly taken up and transported) When his ring at the gate bell is expected, or takes place, every young lady who can, under any pretence, look out of window, looks out of window, while every young lady who is "practising," practises out of time, and the French class becomes so demoralized that the mark goes round as briskly as the bottle at a convivial party in the last century

On the afternoon of the day next after the dinner of two at the gatehouse, the bell is rung with the usual fluttering

results

"Mr Edwin Drood to see Miss Rosa"

This is the announcement of the parlour-maid in chief Miss Twinkleton, with an exemplary air of melancholy on her, turns to the sacrifice, and says "You may go down, my dear" Miss Bud goes down, followed by all eyes

Mr Edwin Drood is waiting in Miss Twinkleton's own parlour a dainty room, with nothing more directly scholastic in it than a terrestrial and celestial globe These expressive machines imply (to parents and guardians) that even when Miss Twinkleton retires into the bosom of privacy, duty may at any moment compel her to become a sort of Wandering Jewess, scouring the earth and soaring through the skies in search of knowledge for her pupils

The last new maid, who has never seen the young gentleman Miss Rosa is engaged to, and who is making his acquaintance between the hinges of the open door, left open for the purpose, stumbles guiltily down the kitchen stairs, as a charming little apparition, with its face concealed by a little silk apron thrown over its head, glides into the parlour

"Oh! it as so ridiculous!" says the apparition, stopping and shrinking "Don't, Eddy!"

"Don't what, Rosa?"

"Don't come any nearer, please It as so absurd."

"What is absurd, Rosa

"The whole thing is It is so absurd to be an engaged orphan, and it is so absurd to have the girls and the servants scuttling about after one, like mice in the wainscot, and it is so absurd to be called upon!"

The apparition appears to have a thumb in the corner of

its mouth while making this complaint

"You give me an affectionate reception, Pussy, I must say

"Well, I will in a minute, Eddy, but I can't just yet

How are you?" (very shortly)

"I am unable to reply that I am much the better for

seeing you, Pussy, masmuch as I see nothing of you"

This second remonstrance brings a dark bright pouting eye out from a corner of the apion, but it swiftly becomes invisible again, as the apparition exclaims "Oh, good gracious! you have had half your hair cut off!"

"I should have done better to have had my head cut off, I think," says Edwin, rumpling the hair in question, with a fierce glance at the looking-glass, and giving an impatient

stamp "Shall I go?"

"No, you needn't go just yet, Eddy The girls would all

be asking questions why you went "

"Once for all, Rosa, will you uncover that ridiculous

little head of yours and give me a welcome?"

The apron is pulled off the childish head, as its wearer replies "You're very welcome, Eddy There! I'm sure that's nice Shake hands No, I can't kiss you, because I've got an acidulated drop in my mouth"

"Are you at all glad to see me, Pussy?"

"Oh, yes, I'm dreadfully glad —Go and sit down —Miss

Twinkleton "

It is the custom of that excellent lady when these visits occur, to appear everythree minutes, either in her own person or in that of Mrs Tisher, and lay an offering on the shrine of Propriety by affecting to look for some desiderated article. On the present occasion Miss Twinkleton, gracefully gliding in and out, says in passing "How do you do, Mr Drood? Very glad indeed to have the pleasure. Pray excuse me Tweezers Thank you!"

"I got the gloves last evening, Eddy; and I like them

very much They are beauties"

"Well, that's something," the affianced replies, half grumbling "The smallest encouragement thankfully received And how did you pass your birthday, Pussy?"

"Delightfully! Everybody gave me a present And we

had a feast And we had a ball at night"

"A-feast and a ball, eh? These occasions seem to go off tolerably well without me, Pussy"

"De-lightfully!" cries Rosa, in a quite spontaneous

manner, and without the least pretence of reserve.

"Hah! And what was the feast?"

"Tarts, oranges, jellies, and shrimps"

"Any partners at the ball?"

- "We danced with one another, of course, sir But some of the girls made game to be their brothers It was so droll."
 - "Did anybody make game to be---"

"To be you? O dear, yes!" cries Rosa, laughing with great enjoyment "That was the first thing done"

"I hope she did it pretty well," says Edwin, rather doubt-

fully

"Oh, it was excellent!—I wouldn't dance with you, you know"

Edwin scarcely seems to see the force of this, begs to

know if he may take the liberty to ask why?

"Because I was so tired of you," returns Rosa But she quickly adds, and pleadingly too, seeing displeasure in his face "Dear Eddy, you were just as tired of me, you know"

"Drd I say so, Rosa?"

"Say so! Do you ever say so? No, you only showed it Oh, she did it so well!" cries Rosa, in a sudden ecstasy with her counterfeit betrothed

"It strikes me that she must be a devilish impudent girl," says Edwin Drood "And so, Pussy, you have passed your last birthday in this old house"

"Ah, yes!" Rosa clasps her hands, looks down with

a sigh, and shakes her head

"You seem to be sorry, Rosa"

"I am sorry for the poor old place Somehow, I feel as if it would miss me, when I am gone so far away, so young "

" Perhaps we had better stop short, Rosa?"

She looks up at him with a swift bright look; next moment shakes her head, sighs, and looks down again

"That is to say, is it, Pussy, that we are both resigned?"
She nods her head again, and after a short silence,
quaintly bursts out with. "You know we must be married,

and married from here, Eddy, or the poor girls will be so dreadfully disappointed!"

For the moment there is more of compassion, both for her and for himself, in her affianced husband's face, than there is of love He checks the look, and asks. "Shall I take

you out for a walk, Rosa dear?"

Rosa dear does not seem at all clear on this point, until her face, which had been comically reflective, brightens. "Oh, yes, Eddy, let us go for a walk! And I tell you what we'll do You shall pretend that you are engaged to somebody else, and I'll pretend that I am not engaged to anybody, and then we shan't quarrel"

"Do you think that will prevent our falling out, Rosa?"
"I know it will Hush! Pretend to look out of win-

dow-Mrs Tisher!"

Through a fortuitous concourse of accidents, the matronly Tisher heaves in sight, says, in rustling through the room like the legendary ghost of a dowager in silken skirts "I hope I see Mr Drood well, though I needn't ask, if I may judge from his complexion I trust I disturb no one, but there was a paper-knife—Oh, thank you, I am sure!" and disappears with her prize

"One other thing you must do, Eddy, to oblige me," says Rosebud "The moment we get into the street, you must put me outside, and keep close to the house yourself

-squeeze and graze yourself against it "

"By all means, Rosa, if you wish it Might I ask why?"

"Oh! because I don't want the girls to see you"

"It's a fine day, but would you like me to carry an umbrella up?"

"Don't be foolish, sir You haven't got polished leather

boots on," pouting, with one shoulder raised

"Perhaps that might escape the notice of the girls, even

if they did see me," remarks Edwin, looking down at his

boots with a sudden distaste for them

"Nothing escapes their notice, sir And then I know what would happen Some of them would begin reflecting on me by saying (for *they* are free) that they never will on any account engage themselves to lovers without polished leather boots Hark! Miss Twinkleton I'll ask for leave"

That discreet lady being indeed heard without, inquiring of nobody in a blandly conversational tone as she advances "Eh? Indeed! Are you quite sure you saw my mother-of-pearl button-holder on the work-table in my room?" is at once solicited for walking leave, and graciously accords it And soon the young couple go out of the Nuns' House, taking all precautions against the discovery of the so vitally defective boots of Mr Edwin Drood precautions, let us hope, effective for the peace of Mrs Edwin Drood that is to be

"Which way shall we take, Rosa?"

Rosa replies "I want to go to the Lumps-of-Delight shop"

"To the --- ?"

"A Turkish sweetmeat, sir My gracious me, don't you understand anything? Call yourself an Engineer and not know that?"

"Why, how should I know it, Rosa?"

"Because I am very fond of them But Oh! I forgot what we are to pretend No, you needn't know anything about them; never mind"

So he is gloomily borne off to the Lumps-of-Delight shop, where Rosa makes her purchase, and, after offering some to him (which he rather indignantly declines), begins to partake of it with great zest previously taking off and rolling up a pair of little pink gloves, like rose-leaves, and occasionally putting her little pink fingers to her rosy lips, to cleanse them from the Dust of Delight that comes off the Lumps

"Now, be a good-tempered Eddy, and pretend And so

you are engaged?"

"And so I am engaged"

- "Is she nice?"
- "Charming"
- "Tall "

"Immensely tall!" Rosa being short

- "Must be gawky, I should think," is Rosa's quiet commentary
- "I beg your pardon, not at all," contradiction rising in him "What is termed a fine woman, a splendid woman"

"Big nose, no doubt," is the quiet commentary again
"Not a little one, certainly," is the quick reply (Rosa's

being a little one)

"Long pale nose, with a red knob in the middle I know the soit of nose," says Rosa, with a satisfied nod, and tranquilly enjoying the Lumps

"You don't know the sort of nose, Rosa," with some

warmth, "because it's nothing of the kind"

"Not a pale nose, Eddy?"

"No" Determined not to assent

"A red nose? Oh! I don't like red noses However, to be sure she can always powder it"

"She would scorn to powder it," says Edwin, becoming

heated

"Would she? What a stupid thing she must be! Is she stupid in everything?"

"No, in nothing"

After a pause, in which the whimsically wicked face has not been unobservant of him, Rosa says —

"And this most sensible of creatures likes the idea of

being carried off to Egypt, does she, Eddy?"

"Yes She takes a sensible interest in triumphs of engineering skill especially when they are to change the whole condition of an undeveloped country"

"Lor!" says Rosa, shrugging her shoulders, with a little

laugh of wonder

"Do you object," Edwin inquires, with a majestic turn of his eyes downward upon the fairy figure "do you object, Rosa, to her feeling that interest?"

"Object? my dear Eddy! But really, doesn't she hate

boilers and things?"

"I can answer for her not being so idiotic as to hate

Boilers," he returns with angry emphasis; "though I cannot answer for her views about Things, really not understanding what Things are meant"

"But don't she hate Arabs, and Turks, and Fellahs, and

people?"

"Certainly not" Very firmly

"At least she *must* hate the Pyramids? Come, Eddy?" "Why should she be such a little—tall, I mean—goose.

as to hate the Pyramids, Rosa?"

"Ah! you should hear Miss Twinkleton," often nodding her head, and much enjoying the Lumps, "bore about them, and then you wouldn't ask Tiresome old burying-grounds Isises, and Ibises, and Cheopses, and Pharaohses, who cares about them? And then there was Belzoni or somebody, dragged out by the legs, half-choked with bats and dust All the girls say Serve him right, and hope it hurt him, and wish he had been quite choked"

The two youthful figures, side by side, but not now arm-inarm, wander discontentedly about the old Close, and each sometimes stops and slowly imprints a deeper footstep in

the fallen leaves

"Well!" says Edwin, after a lengthy silence "According to custom We can't get on, Rosa"

Rosa tosses her head, and says she don't want to

get on

"That's a pretty sentiment, Rosa, considering"

"Considering what?"

"If I say what, you'll go wrong again "

"You'll go wrong, you mean, Eddy. Don't be ungenerous"

"Ungenerous! I like that!"

"Then I don't like that, and so I tell you plainly," Rosa pouts

"Now, Rosa, I put it to you Who disparaged my pro-

fession, my destination-"

"You are not going to be buried in the Pyramids, I hope?" she interrupts, arching her delicate eyebrows "You never said you were If you are, why haven't you mentioned it to me? I can't find out your plans by instinct"

"Now, Rosa, you know very well what I mean, my dear"
"Well then, why did you begin with your detestable rednosed grantesses? And she would, she would, she would,
she would, she would powder it!" cries Rosa, in a little
burst of comical contradictory spleen

"Somehow or other, I never can come right in these discussions," says Edwin, sighing and becoming resigned

"How is it possible, sir, that you ever can come right when you're always wrong? And as to Belzoni, I suppose he's dead,—I'm sure I hope he is—and how can his legs or his chokes concern you?"

"It is nearly time for your return, Rosa We have not

had a very happy walk, have we?"

"A happy walk? A detestably unhappy walk, sir If I go upstairs the moment I get in and cry till I can't take my dancing lesson, you are responsible, mind"

"Let us be friends, Rosa"

"Ah!" cries Rosa, shaking her head, and bursting into real tears, "I wish we could be friends! It's because we can't be friends, that we try one another so I am a young little thing, Eddy, to have an old heartache, but I really, really have, sometimes Don't be angry I know you have one yourself too often We should both of us have done better, if What is to be had been left What might have been I am quite a little serious thing now, and not teasing you Let each of us forbear, this one time, on our own account, and on the other's!"

Disarmed by this glimpse of a woman's nature in the spoilt child, though for an instant disposed to resent it as seeming to involve the enforced infliction of himself upon her, Edwin Drood stands watching her as she childishly cries and sobs, with both hands to the handkerchief at her eyes, and then—she becoming more composed, and indeed beginning in her young inconstancy to laugh at herself for having been so moved—leads her to a seat hard by, under the elm-trees

"One clear word of understanding, Pussy dear I am not clever out of my own line—now I come to think of it, I don't know that I am particularly clever in it—but I want to do right There is not—there may be—I really don't

see my way to what I want to say, but I must say it before we part—there is not any other young——"

"Oh, no, Eddy! It's generous of you to ask me, but no,

no, no i"

They have come very near to the Cathedral windows, and at this moment the organ and the choir sound out sublimely As they sit listening to the solemn swell, the confidence of last night rises in young Edwin Drood's mind, and he thinks how unlike this music is to that discordance

"I fancy I can distinguish Jack's voice," is his remark in a low tone in connection with the train of thought "Take me back at once, please," urges his Affianced, quickly laying her light hand upon his wrist "They will all be coming out directly, let us get away Oh, what a resounding chord! But don't let us stop to listen to it, let us get away!"

Her hurry is over as soon as they have passed out of the Close They go arm-in-arm now, gravely and deliberately enough, along the old High Street, to the Nuns' House At the gate, the street being within sight empty, Edwin bends down his face to Rosebud's

She remonstrates, laughing, and is a childish schoolgirl again

"Eddy, no I'm too sticky to be kissed But give me your hand, and I'll blow a kiss into that"

He does so She breathes a light breath into it and asks, retaining it and looking into it -

"Now say, what do you see?"

"See, Rosa"

"Why, I thought you Egyptian boys could look into a hand and see all sorts of phantoms Can't you see a happy Future?"

For certain, neither of them sees a happy Present, as the gate opens and closes, and one goes in, and the other goes away.

CHAPTER IV.

MR SAPSEA

ACCEPTING the Jackass as the type of self-sufficient stupidity and conceit—a custom, perhaps, like some few other customs, more conventional than fair—then the purest Jackass in Cloisterham is Mr Thomas Sapsea, Auctioneer

Mr Sapsea "dresses at" the Dean, has been bowed to for the Dean, in mistake, has even been spoken to in the street as My Lord, under the impression that he was the Bishop come down unexpectedly, without his chaplain Mr Sapsea is very proud of this, and of his voice, and of his style He has even (in selling landed property) tried the experiment of slightly intoning in his pulpit, to make himself more like what he takes to be the genuine ecclesiastical article So, in ending a Sale by Public Auction, Mr Sapsea finishes off with an air of bestowing a benediction on the assembled brokers, which leaves the real Dean -a modest and worthy gentleman-far behind

Mr Sapsea has many admirers, indeed, the proposition is carried by a large local majority, even including nonbelievers in his wisdom, that he is a credit to Cloisterham He possesses the great qualities of being portentous and dull, and of having a roll in his speech, and another roll in his gait, not to mention a certain gravely flowing action with his hands, as if he were presently going to Confirm the individual with whom he holds discourse Much nearer sixty years of age than fifty, with a flowing outline of stomach, and horizontal creases in his waistcoat, reputed to be rich, voting at elections in the strictly respectable interest, morally satisfied that nothing but he himself has grown since he was a baby, how can dunder-headed Mr Sapsea be otherwise than a credit to Cloisterham, and society?

Mr Sapsea's premises are in the High Street, over against They are of about the period of the the Nuns' House Nuns' House, irregularly modernized here and there, as steadily deteriorating generations found, more and more, that they preferred air and light to Fever and the Plague.

Over the doorway is a wooden effigy, about half life-size, representing Mr Sapsea's father, in a curly wig and toga, m the act of selling. The chastity of the idea, and the natural appearance of the little finger, hammer, and pulpit, have been much admired

Mr Sapsea sits in his dull ground-floor sitting-room, giving first on his paved back-yard, and then on his railed-off garden Mr Sapsea has a bottle of port wine on a table before the fire—the fire is an early luxury, but pleasant on the cool, chilly autumn evening—and is characteristically attended by his portrait, his eight-day clock, and his weather-glass Characteristically, because he would uphold himself against mankind, his weather-glass against weather, and his clock against time

By Mr Sapsea's side on the table are a writing-desk and writing materials Glancing at a scrap of manuscript, Mr Sapsea reads it to himself with a lofty air, and then, slowly pacing the room with his thumbs in the arm-holes of his waist-coat, repeats it from memory so internally, though with much dignity, that the word "Ethelinda" is alone audible

There are three clean wineglasses in a tray on the table His serving-maid entering, and announcing "Mr Jasper is come, sir," Mr Sapsea waves "Admit him," and draws

two wineglasses from the rank, as being claimed

"Glad to see you, sir I congratulate myself on having
the honour of receiving you here for the first time" Mr
Sapsea does the honours of his house in this wise

"You are very good The honour is mine and the self-

congratulation is mine"

"You are pleased to say so, sir But I do assure you that it is a satisfaction to me to receive you in my humble home. And that is what I would not say to everybody." Ineffable loftiness on Mr Sapsea's part accompanies these words, as leaving the sentence to be understood. "You will not easily believe that your society can be a satisfaction to a man like myself, nevertheless, it is."

"I have for some time desired to know you. Mr Sapsea."

"I have for some time desired to know you, Mr Sapsea"

"And I, sir, have long known you by reputation as a man taste Let me fill your glass I will give you, sir," says Mr Sapsea, filling his own -

"When the French come over. May we meet them at Dover'"

This was a patriotic toast in Mr Sapsea's infancy, and he is therefore fully convinced of its being appropriate to any subsequent era

"You can scarcely be ignorant, Mr Sapsea," observes Jasper, watching the auctioneer with a smile as the latter stretches out his legs before the fire, "that you know the

world"

"Well, sir," is the chuckling reply, "I think I know

something of it, something of it"

"Your reputation for that knowledge has always interested and surprised me, and made me wish to know you For Cloisterham is a little place Cooped up in it myself, I know nothing beyond it, and feel it to be a very little place"

"If I have not gone to foreign countries, young man," Mr Sapsea begins, and then stops —"You will excuse me calling you young man, Mr Jasper? You are much

my junior "

"Bv all means"

"If I have not gone to foreign countries, young man, foreign countries have come to me They have come to me in the way of business, and I have improved upon my Put it that I take an inventory, or make a opportunities catalogue I see a French clock I never saw him before. in my life, but I instantly lay my finger on him and say 'Paris!' I see some cups and saucers of Chinese make. equally strangers to me personally I put my finger on them, then and there, and I say 'Pekin, Nankin, and Canton' It is the same with Japan, with Egypt, and with bamboo and sandal-wood from the East Indies, I put my finger on them all I have put my finger on the North Pole before now, and said 'Spear of Esquimaux make, for half a pint of pale sherry!""

"Really? A very remarkable way, Mr Sapsea, of ac-

quiring a knowledge of men and things"

"I mention it, sir," Mr Sapsea rejoins, with unspeakable complacency, "because, as I say, it don't do to boast of what you are, but show how you came to be it, and then you prove it"

"Most interesting We were to speak of the late Mrs

Sapsea"

"We were, sir" Mr Sapsea fills both glasses, and takes the decanter into safe keeping again "Before I consult your opinion as a man of taste on this little trifle"—holding it up—"which is but a trifle, and still has required some thought, sir, some little fever of the brow, I ought perhaps to describe the character of the late Mrs Sapsea, now dead three quarters of a year"

Mr Jasper, in the act of yawning behind his wineglass, puts down that screen and calls up a look of interest. It is a little impaired in its expressiveness by his having a

shut-up gape still to dispose of, with watering eyes

"Half-a-dozen years ago, or so," Mr Sapsea proceeds, "when I had enlarged my mind up to—I will not say to what it now is, for that might seem to aim at too much, but up to the pitch of wanting another mind to be absorbed in it—I cast my eye about me for a nuptial partner Because, as I say, it is not good for man to be alone"

Mr Jasper appears to commit this original idea to

memory

"Miss Brobity at that time kept, I will not call it the rival establishment to the establishment at the Nuns' House opposite, but I will call it the other parallel establishment down town. The world did have it that she showed a passion for attending my sales, when they took place on half holidays, or in vacation time. The world did put it about, that she admired my style. The world did notice that as time flowed by, my style became traceable in the dictation-exercises of Miss Brobity's pupils. Young man, a whisper even sprang up in obscure malignity, that one ignorant and besotted Churl (a parent) so committed himself as to object to it by name. But I do not believe this For is it likely that any human creature in his right senses would so lay himself open to be pointed at, by what I call the finger of scorn?"

Mr Jasper shakes his head Not in the least likely Mr Sapsea, in a grandiloquent state of absence of mind, seems to refill his visitor's glass, which is full already; and

does really refill his own, which is empty

"Miss Brobity's Being, young man, was deeply imbued with homage to Mind She revered Mind, when launched, or, as I say, precipitated, on an extensive knowledge of the world When I made my proposal, she did me the honour to be so overshadowed with a species of Awe, as to be able to articulate only the two words, 'O Thou!' meaning my-Her limpid blue eyes were fixed upon me, her semitransparent hands were clasped together, pallor overspread her aquiline features, and, though encouraged to proceed, she never did proceed a word further I disposed of the parallel establishment by private contract, and we became as nearly one as could be expected under the circumstances But she never could, and she never did, find a phrase satisfactory to her perhaps-too-favourable estimate of my intellect To the very last (feeble action of liver), she addressed me in the same unfinished terms"

Mr Jasper has closed his eyes as the auctioneer has deepened his voice. He now abruptly opens them, and says, in unison with the deepened voice, "Ah!"—rather as if stopping himself on the extreme verge of adding—"men!"

"I have been since," says Mr Sapsea, with his legs stretched out, and solemnly enjoying himself with the wine and the fire, "what you behold me, I have been since a solitary mourner, I have been since, as I say, wasting my evening conversation on the desert air. I will not say that I have reproached myself, but there have been times when I have asked myself the question. What if her husband had been nearer on a level with her? If she had not had to look up quite so high, what might the stimulating action have been upon the liver?"

Mr Jasper says, with an appearance of having fallen into dreadfully low spirits, that he "supposes it was to be"

"We can only suppose so, sir," Mr Sapsea coincides.

"As I say, Man proposes, Heaven disposes It may or may not be putting the same thought in another form, but that is the way I put it"

Mr Jasper murmurs assent

"And now, Mr. Jasper," resumes the auctioneer, producing his scrap of manuscript, "Mrs Sapsea's monument having had full time to settle and dry, let me take your

opinion, as a man of taste, on the inscription I have (as I before remarked, not without some little fever of the brow) drawn out for it Take it in your own hand The setting out of the lines requires to be followed with the eye, as well as the contents with the mind "

Mr. Jasper complying, sees and reads as follows -

ETHELINDA,
Reverential Wife of
MR THOMAS SAPSEA,
AUCTIONEER, VALUER, ESTATE AGENT, &c.,

Whose Knowledge of the World, Though somewhat extensive, Never brought him acquainted with

A SPIRIT

More capable of
LOOKING UP TO HIM
STRANGER, PAUSE

And ask thyself the Question

CANST THOU DO LIKEWISE?

If Not,
WITH A BLUSH RETIRE

Mr Sapsea having risen and stationed himself with his back to the fire, for the purpose of observing the effect of these lines on the countenance of a man of taste, consequently has his face towards the door, when his servingmaid, again appearing, announces, "Durdles is come, sir!" He promptly draws forth and fills the third wineglass, as being now claimed, and replies, "Show Durdles in"

"Admirable!" quoth Mr Jasper, handing back the paper

"You approve, sir?"

"Impossible not to approve Striking, characteristic, and complete"

The auctioneer inclines his head, as one accepting his due and giving a receipt, and invites the entering Durdles to take off that glass of wine (handing the same), for it will warm him'

Durdles is a stonemason, chiefly in the gravestone, tomb, and monument way, and wholly of their colour from head to foot No man is better known in Cloisterham He is the chartered libertine of the place Fame trumpets him a wonderful workman-which, for aught that anybody knows, he may be (as he never works), and a wonderful sot-which everybody knows he is With the Cathedral crypt he is better acquainted than any living authority, it may even be than any dead one It is said that the intimacy of this acquaintance began in his habitually resorting to that secret place, to lock-out the Cloisterham boy-populace, and sleep off the fumes of liquor he having ready access to the Cathedral, as contractor for rough repairs Be this as it may, he does know much about it, and, in the demolition of impedimental fragments of wall, buttress, and pavement, has seen strange sights He often speaks of himself in the third person, perhaps, being a little misty as to his own identity, when he narrates, perhaps impartially adopting the Cloisterham nomenclature in reference to a character of acknowledged distinction Thus he will say, touching his strange sights "Durdles come upon the old chap," in reference to a buried magnate of ancient time and high degree, "by striking right into the coffin with his pick The old chap gave Durdles a look with his open eyes, as much as to say, 'Is your name Durdles? Why, my man, I've been waiting for you a devil of a time!' And then he turned to powder" With a two-foot rule always in his pocket, and a mason's hammer all but always in his hand, Durdles goes continually sounding and tapping all about and about the Cathedral, and whenever he says to Tope "Tope, here's another old un in here!" Tope announces it to the Dean as an established discoverv

In a suit of coarse flannel with horn buttons, a yellow neckerchief with draggled ends, an old hat more russet-coloured than black, and laced boots of the hue of his stony calling, Durdles leads a hazy, gipsy sort of life, carrying his dinner about with him in a small bundle, and sitting on all manner of tombstones to dine. This dinner of Durdles's has become quite a Cloisterham institution, not only be-

cause of his never appearing in public without it, but because of its having been, on certain renowned occasions, taken into custody along with Durdles (as drunk and incapable), and exhibited before the Bench of Justices at the town-hall These occasions, however, have been few and far apart Durdles being as seldom drunk as sober For the rest, he is an old bachelor, and he lives in a little antiquated hole of a house that was never finished supposed to be built, so far, of stones stolen from the city wall To this abode there is an approach, ankle-deep in stone chips, resembling a petrified grove of tombstones, urns, draperies, and broken columns, in all stages of sculpture Herein two journeymen incessantly chip, while other two journeymen, who face each other, incessantly saw stone, dipping as regularly in and out of their sheltering sentry-boxes, as if they were mechanical figures emblematical of Time and Death

To Durdles, when he had consumed his glass of port, Mr Sapsea intrusts that precious effort of his Muse Durdles unfeelingly takes out his two-foot rule, and measures

the lines calmly, alloying them with stone-grit

"This is for the monument, is it, Mr Sapsea?"

"The Inscription Yes" Mr Sapsea waits for its effect on a common mind

"It'll come in to a eighth of a inch," says Durdles "Your servant, Mr Jasper Hope I see you well"

"How are you, Durdles?"

"I've got a touch of the Tombatism on me, Mr Jasper,

but that I must expect "

"You mean the Rheumatism," says Sapsea, in a sharp tone (He is nettled by having his composition so mechan-

ically received)

"No, I don't I mean, Mr Sapsea, the Tombatism It's another sort from Rheumatism Mr Jasper knows what Durdles means You get among them Tombs afore it's well light on a winter morning and keep on, as the Catechism says, a-walking in the same all the days of your life, and you'll know what Durdles means"

"It is a bitter cold place," Mr Jasper assents, with an

antipathetic shiver

"And if it's bitter cold for you, up in the chancel, with

a lot of live breath smoking out about you, what the bitterness is to Durdles, down in the crypt among the earthy damps there, and the dead breath of the old uns," returns that individual, "Durdles leaves you to judge—Is this to be put in hand at once, Mr Sapsea?"

Mr Sapsea, with an Author's anxiety to rush into publi-

cation, replies that it cannot be out of hand too soon

"You had better let me have the key then," says Durdles "Why, man, it is not to be put inside the monument!"

"Durdles knows where it's to be put, Mr Sapsea, no man better Ask e're a man in Cloisterham whether Durdles knows his work"

Mr Sapsea rises, takes a key from a drawer, unlocks an iron safe let into the wall, and takes from it another key

"When Durdles puts a touch or a finish upon his work, no matter where, inside or outside, Durdles likes to look at his work all round, and see that his work is a-doing him

credit," Durdles explains, doggedly

The key proffered him by the bereaved widower being a large one, he slips his two-foot rule into a side-pocket of his flannel trousers made for it, and deliberately opens his flannel coat, and opens the mouth of a large breast-pocket within it before taking the key to place it in that repository

"Why, Durdles!" exclaims Jasper, looking on amused,

"you are undermined with pockets!"

"And I carries weight in 'em too, Mr Jasper Feel those!" producing two other large keys

"Hand me Mr Sapsea's likewise Surely this is the

heaviest of the three 3

"You'll find 'em much of a muchness, I expect," says Durdles "They all belong to monuments They all open Durdles's work Durdles keeps the keys of his work mostly Not that they're much used "

"By-the-bye," it comes into Jasper's mind to say, as he idly examines the keys, "I have been going to ask you, many a day, and have always forgotten. You know they

sometimes call you Stony Durdles, don't you?"

"Clossterham knows me as Durdles, Mr Jasper"

"I am aware of that, of course. But the boys some-

"Oh! if you mind them young imps of boys-" Dur-

dles gruffly interrupts

"I don't mind them any more than you do But there was a discussion the other day among the Choir, whether Stony stood for Tony," clinking one key against another

("Take care of the wards, Mr Jasper")

"Or whether Stony stood for Stephen," clinking with a change of keys

("You can't make a pitch pipe of 'em, Mr Jasper")

"Or whether the name comes from your trade How stands the fact?"

Mr Jasper weighs the three keys in his hand, lifts his head from his idly stooping attitude over the fire, and delivers the keys to Durdles with an ingenuous and friendly face

But the stony one is a gruff one likewise, and that hazy state of his is always an uncertain state, highly conscious of its dignity, and prone to take offence. He drops his two keys back into his pocket one by one, and buttons them up, he takes his dinner-bundle from the chair-back on which he hung it when he came in, he distributes the weight he carries, by tying the third key up in it, as though he were an Ostrich, and liked to dine off cold iron, and he gets out of the room, deigning no word of answer

Mr Sapsea then proposes a hit at backgammon, which, seasoned with his own improving conversation, and terminating in a supper of cold roast beef and salad, begules the golden evening until pretty late. Mr Sapsea's wisdom being, in its delivery to mortals, rather of the diffuse than the epigrammatic order, is by no means expended even then, but his visitor intimates that he will come back for more of the precious commodity on future occasions, and Mr Sapsea lets him off for the present to ponder on the

instalment he carries away

CHAPTER V.

MR DURDLES AND FRIEND.

John Jasper, on his way home through the Close, is brought to a stand-still by the spectack of Stony Durdles, dinner-bundle and all, leaning his back against the iron railing of the burial-ground enclosing it from the old cloister-arches, and a hideous small boy in rags flinging stones at him as a well-defined mark in the moonlight Sometimes the stones hit him, and sometimes they miss him, but Durdles seems indifferent to either fortune. The hideous small boy, on the contrary, whenever he his Durdles, blows a whistle of triumph through a jagged gap, convenient for the purpose, in the front of his mouth, where half his teeth are wanting, and whenever he misses him, yelps out "Mulled agin!" and tries to atone for the failure by taking a more correct and vicious aim

"What are you doing to the man?" demands Jasper,

stepping out into the moonlight from the shade

"Making a cock-shy of him," replies the hideous small boy

"Give me those stones in your hand"

"Yes, I'll give 'em you down your throat, if you come a-ketching hold of me," says the small boy, shaking himself loose, and backing "I'll smash your eye, if you don't look out!"

"Baby-Devil that you are, what has the man done to you?"

"He won't go home"

"What is that to you?"

"He gives me a 'apenny to pelt him home if I ketches him out too late," says the boy And then chants, like a little savage, half stumbling and half dancing among the rags and laces of his dilapidated boots —

"Widdy widdy wen!
I—ket—ches—Im—out—ar—ter—ten,
Widdy widdy wy!
Then—E—don't—go—then—I—shy—
Widdy Widdy Wake-cock warning!"

-with a comprehensive sweep on the last word, and one more delivery at Durdles

This would seem to be a poetical note of preparation, agreed upon, as a caution to Durdles to stand clear if he can, or to betake himself homeward

John Jasper invites the boy with a beck of his head to follow him (feeling it hopeless to drag him, or coax him), and crosses to the iron railing where the Stony (and stoned) One is profoundly meditating

"Do you know this thing, this child" asks Jasper at a

loss for a word that will define this thing "Deputy," says Durdles, with a nod

"Is that its-his-name?" "Deputy," assents Durdles

"I'm man-servant up at the Travellers' Twopenny in Gas Works Garding," this thing explains "All us manservants at Travellers' Lodgings is named Deputy When we're chock full and the Travellers is all abed I come out for my 'elth" Then withdrawing into the road, and taking aim, he resumes -

"Widdy widdy wen! I-ket-ches-Im-out-ar-ter-"

"Hold your hand," cries Jasper, "and don't throw while I stand so near him, or I'll kill you! Come, Durdles, let me walk home with you to-night Shall I carry your bundle?"

"Not on any account," replies Durdles, adjusting it "Durdles was making his reflections here when you come up, sir, surrounded by his works, like a poplar Author — Your own brother-in-law," introducing a sarcophagus within the railing, white and cold in the moonlight "Mrs Sapsea," introducing the monument of that devoted wife.
"Late Incumbent," introducing the Reverend Gentleman's broken column "Departed Assessed Taxes," introducing a vase and towel, standing on what might represent the cake of soap "Former Pastry-cook and Muffin-maker, much respected," introducing gravestone. "All safe and sound here, sir, and all Durdles's work Of the common folk, that is merely bundled up in turf and

brambles, the less said the better A poor lot, soon forgot"

"This creature, Deputy, is behind us," says Jasper,

looking back "Is he to follow us?"

The relations between Durdles and Deputy are of a capricious kind, for, on Durdles's turning himself about with the slow gravity of beery soddenness, Deputy makes a pretty wide circuit into the road and stands on the defensive

"You never cried Widdy Warning before you begun to-night," says Durdles, unexpectedly reminded of, or imagining, an injury

"Yer lie, I did," says Deputy, in his only form of polite

contradiction

"Own brother, sir," observes Durdles, turning himself about again, and as unexpectedly forgetting his offence as he had recalled or conceived it, "own brother to Peter the Wild Boy! But I gave him an object in life"

"At which he takes aim?" Mr Jasper suggests

"That's it, sir," returns Durdles, quite satisfied, "at which he takes aim—I took him in hand and gave him an object—What was he before? A destroyer—What work did he do? Nothing but destruction—What did he earn by it? Short terms in Cloisterham Jail—Not a person, not a piece of property, not a winder, not a horse, nor a dog, nor a cat, nor a bird, nor a fowl, nor a pig, but what he stoned, for want of an enlightened object—I put that enlightened object before him, and now he can turn his honest halfpenny by the three penn'orth a week"

"I wonder he has no competitors"

"He has plenty, Mr Jasper, but he stones 'em all away Now, I don't know what this scheme of mine comes to," pursues Durdles, considering about it with the same sodden gravity, "I don't know what you may precisely call it It ain't a sort of a—scheme of a—National Education?"

"I should say not," replies Jasper

"I should say not," assents Durdles, "then we won't

try to give it a name"

"He still keeps behind us," repeats Jasper, looking over his shoulder, "is he to follow us?"

"We can't help going round by the Travellers' Twopenny, if we go the short way, which is the back way," Durdles answers, "and we'll drop him there"

So they go on, Deputy, as a rear rank one, taking open order, and invading the silence of the hour and place by stoning every wall, post, pillar, and other manimate object, by the deserted way

"Is there anything new down in the crypt, Durdles?"

asks John Jasper

"Anything old, I think you mean," growls Durdles "It am't a spot for novelty"

"Any new discovery on your part, I meant"

"There's a old un under the seventh pillar on the left as you go down the broken steps of the little underground chapel as formerly was, I make him out (so fur as I've made him out yet) to be one of them old uns with a crook To judge from the size of the passages in the walls, and of the steps and doors, by which they come and went, them crooks must have been a good deal in the way of the old uns! Two on 'em meeting promiscuous must have hitched one another by the mitre pretty often, I should say"

Without any endeavour to correct the literality of this opinion, Jasper surveys his companion—covered from head to foot with old mortar, lime, and stone grit—as though he, Jasper, were getting imbued with a romantic interest in his weird life

"Yours is a curious existence"

Without furnishing the least clue to the question whether he receives this as a compliment or as quite the reverse,

Durdles gruffly answers "Yours is another"

"Well inasmuch as my lot is cast in the same old earthy, chilly, never-changing place, Yes But there is much more mystery and interest in your connection with the Cathedral than in mine Indeed, I am beginning to have some idea of asking you to take me on as a sort of student, or free 'prentice, under you, and to let me go about with you sometimes, and see some of these odd nooks in which you pass your days"

The Stony One replies, in a general way, "All right.

Everybody knows where to find Durdles, when he's wanted" Which, if not strictly true, is approximately so, if taken to express that Durdles may always be found in a

state of vagabondage somewhere

"What I dwell upon most," says Jasper, pursuing his subject of romantic interest, "is the remarkable accuracy with which you would seem to find out where people are buried—What is the matter? That bundle is in your way, let me hold it"

Durdles has stopped and backed a little (Deputy, attentive to all his movements, immediately skirmishing into the road), and was looking about for some ledge or corner to place his bundle on, when thus relieved of it

"Just you give me my hammer out of that," says

Durdles, "and I'll show you"

Clink, clink And his hammer is handed him

"Now, lookee here You pitch your note, don't you, Mr Jasper?"

"Yes"

"So I sound for mine I take my hammer, and I tap" (Here he strikes the pavement, and the attentive Deputy skirmishes at a rather wider range, as supposing that his head may be in requisition) 'I tap, tap, tap Solid! I go on tapping Solid still! Tap again Holloa! Hollow! Tap again, persevering Solid in hollow! Tap, tap, tap, to try it better Solid in hollow, and inside solid, hollow again! There you are! Old un crumbled away in stone coffin, in vault!"

"Astonishing!"

"I have even done this," says Durdles, drawing out his two-foot rule (Deputy meanwhile skirmishing nearer, as suspecting that Treasure may be about to be discovered, which may somehow lead to his own enrichment and the delicious treat of the discoverers being hanged by the neck, on his evidence, until they are dead) "Say that hammer of mine's a wall—my work Two, four, and two is six," measuring on the pavement "Six foot inside that wall is Mrs Sapsea"

"Not really Mrs Sapsea?"

"Say Mrs Sapsea. Her wall's thicker, but say Mrs

Sapsea Durdles taps that wall represented by that hammer, and says, after good sounding 'Something betwixt us!' Sure enough, some rubbish has been left in that same six-foot space by Durdles's men!"

Jasper opines that such accuracy "is a gift"

"I wouldn't have it at a gift," returns Durdles, by no means receiving the observation in good part "I worked it out for myself Durdles comes by his knowledge through grubbing deep for it, and having it up by the roots when it don't want to come —Holloa you, Deputy "

"Widdy!" is Deputy's shrill response, standing off again.
"Catch that ha'penny And don't let me see any more of you to-night, after we come to the Travellers' Twopenny"

"Warning!" returns Deputy, having caught the halfpenny, and appearing by this mystic word to express his

assent to the arrangement

They have but to cross what was once the vineyard, belonging to what was once the Monastery, to come into the narrow black lane wherein stands the crazy wooden house of two low stories currently known as the Travellers' Twopenny —a house all warped and distorted, like the morals of the travellers, with scant remains of a lattice-work porch over the door, and also of a rustic fence before its stamped-out garden, by reason of the travellers being so bound to the premises by a tender sentiment (or so fond of having a fire by the roadside in the course of the day), that they can never be persuaded or threatened into departure, without violently possessing themselves of some wooden forget-me-not, and bearing it off

The semblance of an inn is attempted to be given to this wretched place by fragments of conventional red curtaining in the windows, which rags are made muddily transparent in the night-season by feeble lights of rush or cotton dip burning dully in the close air of the inside. As Durdles and Jasper come near, they are addressed by an inscribed paper lantern over the door, setting forth the purport of the house. They are also addressed by some half-dozen other hideous small boys—whether twopenny lodgers or followers or hangers-on of such, who knows!—who, as if attracted by some carrion-scent of Deputy in the air, start into the

moonlight, as vultures might gather in the desert, and instantly fall to stoning him and one another

"Stop; you young brutes," cried Jasper, angrily, "and let us go by!"

let us go by!"

This remonstrance being received with yells and flying stones, according to a custom of late years comfortably established among the police regulations of our English communities, where Christians are stoned on all sides, as if the days of Saint Stephen were revived, Durdles remarks of the young savages, with some point, that "they haven't got an object," and leads the way down the lane

At the corner of the lane, Jasper, hotly enraged, checks his companion and looks back. All is silent. Next moment, a stone coming rattling at his hat, and a distant yell of "Wake-cock! Warning!" followed by a crow, as from some infernally-hatched Chanticleer, apprising him under whose victorious fire he stands, he turns the corner into safety, and takes Durdles home. Duidles stumbling among the litter of his stony yard as if he were going to turn head foremost into one of the unfinished tombs.

John Jasper returns by another way to his gatehouse,

John Jasper returns by another way to his gatehouse, John Jasper returns by another way to his gatehouse, and entering softly with his key, finds his fire still burning He takes from a locked press a peculiar-looking pipe, which he fills—but not with tobacco—and, having adjusted the contents of the bowl, very carefully, with a little instrument, ascends an inner staircase of only a few steps, leading to two rooms. One of these is his own sleeping chamber the other is his nephew's. There is a light in each. His nephew lies asleep, calm and untroubled. John Jasper stands looking down upon him, his unlighted pipe in his hand, for some time, with a fixed and deep attention. Then, hushing his footsteps, he passes to his own room, lights his pipe, and delivers himself to the Spectres it invokes at midnight.

vokes at midnight

CHAPTER VI

PHILANTHROPY IN MINOR CANON CORNER

THE Reverend Septimus Crisparkle (Septimus, because six little brother Crisparkles before him went out, one by one, as they were born, like six weak little rushlights, as they were lighted), having broken the thin morning ice near Cloisterham Weir with his amiable head, much to the invigoration of his frame, was now assisting his circulation by boxing at a looking-glass with great science and prowess. A fresh and healthy portrait the looking-glass presented of the Reverend Septimus, feinting and dodging with the utmost artfulness, and hitting out from the shoulder with the utmost straightness, while his radiant features teemed with innocence, and soft-hearted benevolence beamed from his boxing-gloves

It was scarcely breakfast-time yet, for Mrs Crisparkle—mother, not wife of the Reverend Septimus—was only just down, and waiting for the urn Indeed, the Reverend Septimus left off at this very moment to take the pretty old lady's entering face between his boxing-gloves and kiss it Having done so with tenderness, the Reverend Septimus turned to again, countering with his left, and putting in

his right in a tremendous manner

"I say, every morning of my life, that you'll do it at last, Sept," remarked the old lady, looking on, "and so you will"

"Do what, Ma dear?"

"Break the pier-glass, or burst a blood-vessel"

"Neither, please God, Ma dear Here's wind, Ma Look at this!"

In a concluding round of great severity, the Reverend Septimus administered and escaped all sorts of punishment, and wound up by getting the old lady's cap into Chancery—such is the technical term used in scientific circles by the learned in the Noble Art—with a lightness of touch that hardly stirred the lightest lavender or cherry

riband on it Magnanimously releasing the defeated, just in time to get his gloves into a drawer and feigh to be looking out of window in a contemplative state of mind when a servant entered, the Reverend Septimus then gave place to the urn and other preparations for breakfast. These completed, and the two alone again, it was pleasant to see (or would have been, if there had been any one to see it, which there never was) the old lady standing to say the Lord's Prayer aloud, and her son, Minor Canon nevertheless, standing with bent head to hear it, he being within five years of forty much as he had stood to hear the same words from the same lips when he was within five months of four

What is prettier than an old lady—except a young lady—when her eyes are bright, when her figure is trim and compact, when her face is cheerful and calm, when her dress is as the dress of a china shepherdess—so dainty in its colours, so individually assorted to herself, so neatly moulded on her? Nothing is prettier, thought the good Minor Canon frequently, when taking his seat at table opposite his long-widowed mother—Her thought at such times may be condensed into the two words that oftenest did duty together in all her conversations "My Sept!"

They were a good pair to sit breakfasting together in Minor Canon Corner, Cloisterham For Minor Canon Corner was a quiet place in the shadow of the Cathedral, which the cawing of the rooks, the echoing footsteps of rare passers, the sound of the Cathedral bell, or the roll of the Cathedral organ, seemed to render more quiet than absolute silence Swaggering fighting men had had their centuries of ramping and raving about Minor Canon Corner, and beaten serfs had had their centuries of drudging and dying there, and powerful monks had had their centuries of being sometimes useful and sometimes harmful there, and behold they were all gone out of Minor Canon Corner, and so much the better Perhaps one of the highest uses of their ever having been there, was, that there might be left behind, that blessed air of tranquillity which pervaded Minor Canon Corner, and that serenely romantic state of the mind—productive for the most part of pity and forbearance

-which is engendered by a sorrowful story that is all told,

or a pathetic play that is played out

Red-blick walls harmoniously toned down in colour by time, strong-rooted vy, latticed windows, panelled rooms, big oaken beams in little places and stone-walled gardens where annual fruit yet ripened upon monkish trees, were the principal surrounding of pretty old Mrs Crisparkle and the Reverend Septimus as they sat at breakfast

"And what, Ma dear," inquired the Minor Canon, giving proof of a wholesome and vigorous appetite, "does the

letter say?"

The pretty old lady, after reading it, had just laid it down upon the breakfast-cloth. She handed it over to her son

Now, the old lady was exceedingly proud of her bright eyes being so clear that she could read writing without spectacles. Her son was also so proud of the circumstance, and so dutifully bent on her deriving the utmost possible gratification from it, that he had invented the pretence that he himself could not read writing without spectacles. Therefore he now assumed a pair, of grave and prodigious proportions, which not only seriously inconvenienced his nose and his breakfast, but seriously impeded his perusal of the letter. For, he had the eyes of a microscope and a telescope combined, when they were unassisted

"It's from Mr Honeythunder, of course," said the old

lady, folding her arms

"Of course," assented her son. He then lamely read on —

"' Haven of Philanthropy,
"Chief Offices, London, Wednesday

"'DEAR MADAM,

"'I write in the—, In the what's this? What does he write in?"

"In the chair," said the old lady

The Reverend Septimus took off his spectacles, that he might see her face, as he exclaimed —

"Why, what should he write in?"

"Bless me, bless me, Sept," returned the old lady, "you don't see the context! Give it back to me, my dear."

Glad to get his-spectacles off (for they always made his eyes water), her son obeyed murmuring that his sight for reading manuscript got worse and worse daily

"'I write," his mother went on, reading very perspicuously and precisely, "from the chair, to which I shall

probably be confined for some hours '"

Septimus looked at the row of chairs against the wall,

with a half-protesting and half-appealing countenance

"'We have,'" the old lady read on with a little extra emphasis, "'a meeting of our Convened Chief Composite Committee of Central and District Philanthropists, at our Head Haven as above, and it is their unanimous pleasure that I take the chair'"

Septimus breathed more freely, and muttered "Oh! if

he comes to that, let him "

"'Not to lose a day's post, I take the opportunity of a long report being read, denouncing a public miscreant—""

"It is a most extraordinary thing," interposed the gentle Minor Canon, laying down his knife and fork to rub his ear in a vexed manner, "that these Philanthropists are always denouncing somebody And it is another most extraordinary thing that they are always so violently flush of miscreants!"

"'Denouncing a public miscreant!'"—the old lady resumed, "'to get our little affairs of business off my mind I have spoken with my two wards, Neville and Helena Landless, on the subject of their defective education, and they give in to the plan proposed, as I should have taken

good care they did, whether they liked it or not '"

"And it is another most extraordinary thing," remarked the Minor Canon in the same tone as before, "that these Philanthropists are so given to seizing their fellow-creatures by the scruff of the neck, and (as one may say) bumping them into the paths of peace.—I beg your pardon, Ma dear, for interrupting"

"Therefore, dear Madam, you will please prepare your son, the Rev Mr Septimus, to expect Neville as an inmate to be read with, on Monday next On the same day Helena will accompany him to Cloisterham, to take up her quarters at the Nuns' House, the establishment recommended by yourself and son jointly Please likewise to prepare for her reception and tuition there. The terms in both cases are understood to be exactly as stated to me in writing by yourself, when I opened a correspondence with you on this subject, after the honour of being introduced to you at your sister's house in town here. With compliments to the Rev. Mr. Septimus, I am, Dear Madam, Your affectionate brother (In Philanthropy), Luke Honeythunder."

"Well, Ma," said Septimus, after a little more rubbing of his ear, "we must try it There can be no doubt that we have room for an inmate, and that I have time to bestow upon him, and inclination too I must confess to feeling rather glad that he is not Mr Honeythunder himself Though that seems wretchedly prejudiced—does it not?—for I never saw him Is he a large man, Ma?"

"I should call him a large man, my dear," the old lady replied after some hesitation, "but that his voice is so

much larger"

"Than himself?"
"Than anybody"

"Hah!" said Septimus And finished his breakfast as if the flavour of the Superior Family Souchong, and also of the ham and toast and eggs, were a little on the wane

Mrs Crisparkle's sister, another piece of Dresden china, and matching her so neatly that they would have made a delightful pair of ornaments for the two ends of any capacious old-fashioned chimney-piece, and by right should never have been seen apart, was the childless wife of a clergyman holding Corporation preferment in London City Mr Honeythunder in his public character of Professor of Philanthropy had come to know Mrs Crisparkle during the last re-matching of the china ornaments (in other words during her last annual visit to her sister), after a public occasion of a philanthropic nature, when certain devoted orphans of tender years had been glutted with plum buns, and plump bumptiousness These were all the antecedents known in Minor Canon Corner of the coming pupils

"I am sure you will agree with me, Ma," said Mr Crisparkle, after thinking the matter over, "that the first thing

to be done, is, to put these young people as much at their ease as possible. There is nothing disinterested in the notion, because we cannot be at our ease with them unless they are at their ease with us. Now, Jasper's nephew is down here at present, and like takes to like, and youth takes to youth. He is a cordial young fellow, and we will have him to meet the brother and sister at dinner. That's three. We can't think of asking him, without asking Jasper. That's four. Add Miss Twinkleton and the fairy bride that is to be, and that's six. Add our two selves, and that's eight. Would eight at a friendly dinner at all put you out, Ma?"

"Nine would, Sept," returned the old lady, visibly

nervous

"My dear Ma, I particularize eight"

"The exact size of the table and the room, my dear"

So it was settled that way, and when Mr Crisparkle called with his mother upon Miss Twinkleton, to arrange for the reception of Miss Helena Landless at the Nuns' House, the two other invitations having reference to that establishment were proffered and accepted Miss Twinkleton did, indeed, glance at the globes, as regretting that they were not formed to be taken out into society, but became reconciled to leaving them behind Instructions were then despatched to the Philanthropist for the departure and arrival, in good time for dinner, of Mr Neville and Miss Helena, and stock for soup became fragrant in the air of Minor Canon Corner

In those days there was no railway to Cloisterham, and Mr Sapsea said there never would be Mr Sapsea said more, he said there never should be And yet, marvellous to consider, it has come to pass, in these days, that Express Trains don't think Cloisterham worth stopping at, but yell and whirl through it on their larger errands, casting the dust off their wheels as a testimony against its insignificance. Some remote fragment of Main Line to somewhere else, there was, which was going to ruin the Money Market if it failed, and Church and State if it succeeded, and (of course) the Constitution, whether or no, but even that had already so unsettled Cloisterham traffic, that the

traffic, deserting the high-road, came sneaking in from an unprecedented part of the country by a back stable-way, for many years labelled at the corner "Beware of the Dog"

To this ignominious avenue of approach, Mr Crisparkle repaired, awaiting the arrival of a short squat omnibus, with a disproportionate heap of luggage on the roof—like a little Elephant with infinitely too much Castle—which was then the daily service between Cloisterham and external mankind As this vehicle lumbered up, Mr Crisparkle could hardly see anything else of it for a large outside passenger seated on the box, with his elbows squared, and his hands on his knees, compressing the driver into a most un comfortable small compass, and glowering about him with a strongly-marked face

"Is this Cloisterham?" demanded the passenger, in a

tremendous voice

"It is," replied the driver, rubbing himself as if he ached, after throwing the reins to the ostler "And I never was so glad to see it"

"Tell your master to make his box-seat wider, then," returned the passenger "Your master is morally bound -and ought to be legally, under ruinous penalties-to provide for the comfort of his fellow-man"

The driver instituted, with the palms of his hands, a superficial perquisition into the state of his skeleton, which seemed to make him anxious

"Have I sat upon you?" asked the passenger

"You have," said the driver, as if he didn't like it at all

"Take that card, my friend"

"I think I won't deprive you on it," returned the driver, casting his eyes over it with no great favour, without tak-"What's the good of it to me ." mg it

"Be a Member of that Society," said the passenger

"What shall I get by it?" asked the driver "Brotherhood," returned the passenger, in a ferocious voice.

"Thankee," said the driver, very deliberately, as he got down, "my mother was contented with myself, and so am I I don't want no brothers "

"But you must have them," replied the passenger, also descending, "whether you like it or not I am your brother"

"I say!" expostulated the driver, becoming more chafed

in temper, "not too fur! The worm zwill, when-"

But here Mr Crisparkle interposed, remonstrating aside, in a friendly voice "Joe, Joe, Joe! don't forget yourself, Joe, my good fellow!" and then, when Joe peaceably touched his hat, accosting the passenger with "Mr Honeythunder?"

"That is my name, sir"
"My name is Crisparkle"

"Reverend Mr Septimus? Glad to see you, sir Neville and Helena are inside Having a little succumbed of late, under the pressure of my public labours, I thought I would take a mouthful of fresh air, and come down with them, and return at night So you are the Reverend Mr Septimus, are you?" surveying him on the whole with disappointment, and twisting a double eyeglass by its ribbon, as if he were roasting it, but not otherwise using it "Hah! I expected to see you older, sir"

"I hope you will," was the good-humoured reply

"Eh?" demanded Mr Honeythunder

"Only a poor little joke Not worth repeating"

"Joke? Ay, I never see a joke," Mr Honeythunder frowningly retorted "A joke is wasted upon me, sir Where are they? Helena and Neville, come here! Mr

Crisparkle has come down to meet you"

An unusually handsome lithe young fellow, and an unusually handsome lithe girl, much alike, both very dark, and very rich in colour, she of almost the gipsy type, something untamed about them both, a certain air upon them of hunter and huntress, yet withal a certain air of being the objects of the chase, rather than the followers Slender, supple, quick of eye and limb, half shy, half defiant; fierce of look, an indefinable kind of pause coming and going on their whole expression, both of face and form, which might be equally likened to the pause before a crouch or a bound. The rough mental notes made in the first five minutes by Mr Crisparkle would have read thus, verbater.

He invited Mr Honeythunder to dinner, with a troubled mind (for the discomfiture of the dear old china shepherdess lay heavy on it), and gave his arm to Helena Landless Both she and her brother, as they walked all together through the ancient streets, took great delight in what he pointed out of the Cathedral and the Monastery ruin, and wondered—so his notes ran on—much as if they were beautiful barbaric captives brought from some wild tropical dominion Mr Honeythunder walked in the middle of the road, shouldering the natives out of his way, and loudly developing a scheme he had, for making a raid on all the unemployed persons in the United Kingdom, laying them every one by the heels in jail, and forcing them, on pain of

prompt extermination, to become philanthropists

Mrs Crisparkle had need of her own share of philanthropy when she beheld this very large and very loud excrescence on the little party Always something, in the nature of a Boil upon the face of society, Mr Honeythunder expanded into an inflammatory Wen in Minor Canon Corner Though it was not literally true, as was facetiously charged against him by public unbelievers, that he called aloud to his fellow-creatures "Curse your souls and bodies, come here and be blessed!" still his philanthropy was of that gunpowderous sort that the difference between it and animosity was hard to determine You were to abolish military force, but you were first to bring all commanding officers who had done their duty, to trial by court-martial for that offence, and shoot them to abolish war, but were to make converts by making war upon them, and charging them with loving war as the apple of their eye You were to have no capital punishment, but were first to sweep off the face of the earth all legislators, jurists, and judges who were of the contrary opinion You were to have universal concord, and were to get it by eliminating all the people who wouldn't, or conscientiously couldn't, be concordant. You were to love your brother as yourself, but after an indefinite interval of maligning him (very much as if you hated him), and calling him all manner of names Above all things, you were to do nothing in private, or on your own account.

You were to go to the offices of the Haven of Philanthropy, and put your name down as a Member and a Professing Philanthropist. Then, you were to pay up your subscription, get your card of membership and your riband and medal, and were evermore to live upon a platform, and evermore to say what Mr. Honeythunder said, and what the Treasurer said, and what the sub-Treasurer said, and what the Committee said, and what the Sub-Committee said, and what the Secretary said. And this was usually said in the unanimously-carried resolution under hand and seal, to the effect. "That this assembled Body of Professing Philanthropists views, with indignant scorn and contempt, not unmixed with utter detestation and loathing abhorrence."—in short, the baseness of all those who do not belong to it, and pledges itself to make as many obnoxious statements as possible about them, without being at all particular as to facts.

The dinner was a most doleful breakdown. The philan-

thropist deranged the symmetry of the table, sat himself in the way of the waiting, blocked up the thoroughfare, and drove Mr Tope (who assisted the parlour-maid) to the verge of distraction by passing plates and dishes on, over his own head Nobody could talk to anybody, because he held forth to everybody at once, as if the company had no individual existence, but were a Meeting He impounded the Reverend Mr Septimus, as an official personage to be addressed, or kind of human peg to hang his oratorical hat on, and fell into the exasperating habit, common among such orators, of impersonating him as a wicked and weak opponent Thus, he would ask "And will you, sir, now stultify yourself by telling me "-and so forth, when the innocent man had not opened his lips, nor meant to open Or he would say "Now see, sir, to what a position vou are reduced I will leave you no escape hausting all the resources of fraud and falsehood, during years upon years, after exhibiting a combination of dastardly meanness with ensanguined daring, such as the world has not often witnessed, you have now the hypocrisy to bend the knee before the most degraded of mankind, and to sue and whine and howl for mercy!" Whereat the unfortunate Minor Canon would look, in part indignant and in part perplexed, while his worthy mother sat bridling, with tears in her eyes, and the remainder of the party lapsed into a sort of gelatinous state, in which there was no flavour

or solidity, and very little resistance

But the gush of philanthropy that burst forth when the departure of Mr Honeythunder began to impend, must have been highly gratifying to the feelings of that distinguished man His coffee was produced, by the special activity of Mr Tope, a full hour before he wanted it Mr Crisparkle sat with his watch in his hand for about the same period, lest he should overstay his time. The four young people were unanimous in believing that the Cathedral clock struck three-quarters, when it actually struck but Miss Twinkleton estimated the distance to the omnibus at five-and-twenty minutes' walk, when it was really The affectionate kindness of the whole circle hustled him into his greatcoat, and shoved him out into the moonlight. as if he were a fugitive traitor with whom they sympathized, and a troop of horse were at the back door Mr Crisparkle and his new charge, who took him to the omnibus, were so fervent in their apprehensions of his catching cold, that they shut him up in it instantly and left him, with still halfan-hour to spare

CHAPTER VII

MORE CONFIDENCES THAN ONE

"I know very little of that gentleman, sir," said Neville to the Minor Canon as they turned back

"You know very little of your guardian?" the Minor Canon repeated

"Almost nothing!"

"How came he______

"To be my guardian? I'll tell you, sir I suppose you know that we come (my sister and I) from Ceylon?"

"Indeed, no."

"I wonder at that We lived with a stepfather there.

Our mother died there, when we were little children We have had a wretched existence She made him our guardian, and he was a miserly wretch who grudged us food to eat, and clothes to wear At his death, he passed us over to this man, for no better reason that I know of, than his being a friend or connection of his, whose name was always in print and catching his attention "

"That was lately, I suppose?"

"Quite lately, sir This stepfather of ours was a cruel brute as well as a grinding one It is well he died when he did, or I might have killed him"

Mr Crisparkle stopped short in the moonlight and looked

at his hopeful pupil in consternation

"I surprise you, sir?" he said, with a quick change to a submissive manner

"You shock me, unspeakably shock me"

The pupil hung his head for a little while, as they walked on, and then said "You never saw him beat your sister I have seen him beat mine, more than once or twice, and I never forgot it"

"Nothing," said Mr Crisparkle, "not even a beloved and beautiful sister's tears under dastardly ill-usage," he became less severe, in spite of himself, as his indignation rose, "could justify those horrible expressions that you used"

"I am sorry I used them, and especially to you, sir I beg to recall them But permit me to set you right on one point You spoke of my sister's tears My sister would have let him tear her to pieces, before she would have let him believe that he could make her shed a tear"

Mr Crisparkle reviewed those mental notes of his, and was neither at all surprised to hear it, nor at all disposed

to question it

"Perhaps you will think it strange, sir,"—this was said in a hesitating voice—"that I should so soon ask you to allow me to confide in you, and to have the kindness to hear a word or two from me in my defence?"

"Defence?" Mr. Crisparkle repeated "You are not

on your defence, Mr Neville"

"I think I am, sir At least I know I should be, if you were better acquainted with my character"

"Well, Mr Neville," was the rejoinder "What if you leave me to find it out?"

"Since it is your pleasure, sir," answered the young man, with a quick change in his manner to sullen disappointment "since it is your pleasure to check me in my impulse, I must submit"

There was that in the tone of this short speech which made the conscientious man to whom it was addressed It hinted to him that he might, without meaning it, turn aside a trustfulness beneficial to a mis-shapen young mind and perhaps to his own power of directing and improving it They were within sight of the lights in his windows, and he stopped

"Let us turn back and take a turn or two up and down, Mr Neville, or you may not have time to finish what you wish to say to me You are hasty in thinking that I mean to check you Quite the contrary I invite your

confidence"

"You have invited it, sir, without knowing it, ever since I say 'ever since,' as if I had been here I came here a week The truth is, we came here (my sister and I) to quarrel with you, and affront you, and break away again"

"Really?" said Mr Crisparkle, at a dead loss for any-

thing else to say

"You see, we could not know what you were beforehand, sir, could we?"

"Clearly not," said Mr Crisparkle

"And having liked no one else with whom we have ever been brought into contact, we had made up our minds not to like you"

"Really?" said Mr Crisparkle again

"But we do like you, sir, and we see an unmistakable difference between your house and your reception of us, and anything else we have ever known This-and my happening to be alone with you-and everything around us seeming so quiet and peaceful after Mr Honeythunder's departure—and Cloisterham being so old and grave and beautiful, with the moon shining on it-these things inclined me to open my heart"

"I quite understand, Mr Neville And it is salutary to listen to such influences"

"In describing my own imperfections, sir, I must ask you not to suppose that I am describing my sister's She has come out of the disadvantages of our miserable life, as much better than I am, as that Cathedral tower is higher than those chimneys"

Mr Crisparkle in his own breast was not so sure of this

"I have had, sir, from my earliest remembrance, to suppress a deadly and bitter hatred. This has made me secret and revengeful. I have been always tyrannically held down by the strong hand. This has driven me, in my weakness, to the resource of being false and mean. I have been stinted of education, liberty, money, dress, the very necessaries of life, the commonest pleasures of childhood, the commonest possessions of youth. This has caused me to be utterly wanting in I don't know what emotions, or remembrances, or good instincts—I have not even a name for the thing, you see!—that you have had to work upon in other young men to whom you have been accustomed."

"This is evidently true But this is not encouraging,"

thought Mr Crisparkle as they turned again

"And to finish with, sir I have been brought up among abject and servile dependents, of an inferior race, and I may easily have contracted some affinity with them Sometimes, I don't know but that it may be a drop of what is tigerish in their blood"

"As in the case of that remark just now," thought Mr

Crisparkle

"In a last word of reference to my sister, sir (we are twin children), you ought to know to her honour, that nothing in our misery ever subdued her, though it often cowed me When we ran away from it (we ran away four times in six years, to be soon brought back and cruelly punished), the flight was always of her planning and leading Each time she dressed as a boy, and showed the daring of a man I take it we were seven years old when we first decamped, but I remember, when I lost the pocket-knife with which she was to have cut her hair short, how desperately she tried to tear it out, or bite it off. I have

nothing further to say, sir, except that I hope you will bear

with me, and make allowance for me"

"Of that, Mr Neville, you may be sure," returned the Minor Canon "I don't preach more than I can help, and I will not repay your confidence with a sermon But I entreat you to bear in mind, very seriously and steadily, that if I am to do you any good, it can only be with your own assistance, and that you can only render that, efficiently, by seeking aid from Heaven"

"I will try to do my part, sir"

"And, Mr Neville, I will try to do mine Here is my hand on it May God bless our endeavours!"

They were now standing at his house-door, and a cheer-

ful sound of voices and laughter was heard within

"We will take one more turn before going in," said Mr Crisparkle, "for I want to ask you a question When you said you were in a changed mind concerning me, you spoke, not only for yourself, but for your sister too?"

"Undoubtedly I did, sir"

"Excuse me, Mr Neville, but I think you have had no opportunity of communicating with your sister, since I met you Mr Honeythunder was very eloquent, but perhaps I may venture to say, without ill-nature, that he rather monopolized the occasion May you not have answered for your sister without sufficient warrant?"

Neville shook his head with a proud smile

"You don't know, sir, yet, what a complete understanding can exist between my sister and me, though no spoken word—perhaps hardly as much as a look—may have passed between us She not only feels as I have described, but she very well knows that I am taking this opportunity of speaking to you, both for her and for myself"

Mr Crisparkle looked in his face, with some incredulity, but his face expressed such absolute and firm conviction of the truth of what he said, that Mr Crisparkle looked at the pavement, and mused, until they came to his door again

"I will ask for one more turn, sir, this time," said the young man, with a rather heightened colour rising in his face "But for Mr Honeythunder's—I think you call it eloquence, sir?" (somewhat slyly)

"I-yes, I called it eloquence," said Mr. Crisparkle

"But for Mr Honeythunder's eloquence, I might have had no need to ask you what I am going to ask you This Mr Edwin Drood, sir I think that's the name?"

"Quite correct," said Mr Crisparkle "D-r-double o-d"

"Does he-or did he-read with you, sir?"

"Never, Mr Neville He comes here visiting his relation, Mr Jasper",

"Is Miss Bud his relation too, sir?"

(" Now, why should he ask that, with sudden superciliousness?" thought Mr Crisparkle) Then he explained, aloud, what he knew of the little story of their betrothal

"Oh! that's it, is it?" said the young man "I under-

stand his air of proprietorship now!"

This was said so evidently to himself, or to anybody rather than Mr Crisparkle, that the latter instinctively felt as if to notice it would be almost tantamount to noticing a passage in a letter which he had read by chance over the writer's shoulder A moment afterwards they re-entered the house

Mr Jasper was seated at the plano as they came into his drawing-room, and was accompanying Miss Rosebud while she sang It was a consequence of his playing the accompaniment without notes, and of her being a heedless little creature, very apt to go wrong, that he followed her hps most attentively, with his eyes as well as hands, carefully and softly hinting the key-note from time to time Standing with an arm drawn round her, but with a face far more intent on Mr Jasper than on her singing, stood Helena, between whom and her brother an instantaneous recognition passed, in which Mr Crisparkle saw, or thought he saw, the understanding that had been spoken of, flash out Mr Neville then took his admiring station, leaning against the piano, opposite the singer, Mr. Crisparkle sat down by the china shepherdess, Edwin Drood gallantly furled and unfurled Miss Twinkleton's fan, and that lady passively claimed that sort of exhibitor's proprietorship in the accomplishment on view, which Mr. Tope, the Verger, daily claimed in the Cathedral service.

The song went on. It was a sorrowful strain of parting, and the fresh young voice was very plaintive and tender As Jasper watched the pretty lips, and ever and again hinted the one note, as though it were a low whisper from himself, the voice became less steady, until all at once the singer broke into a burst of tears, and shrieked out, with her hands over her eyes "I can't bear this! I am frightened! Take me away!"

With one swift turn of her lithe figure, Helena laid the little beauty on a sofa, as if she had never caught her up Then, on one knee beside her, and with one hand upon her rosy mouth, while with the other she appealed to all the rest, Helena said to them "It's nothing, it's all over, don't speak to her for one minute, and she is

well!"

Jasper's hands had, in the same instant, lifted themselves from the keys, and were now poised above them, as though he waited to resume. In that attitude he yet sat quiet not even looking round, when all the rest had changed their places and were reassuring one another

"Pussy's not used to an audience, that's the fact," said Edwin Drood "She got nervous, and couldn't hold out Besides, Jack, you are such a conscientious master and require so much, that I believe you make her afraid of you.

No wonder "

"No wonder," repeated Helena

"There, Jack, you hear! You would be afraid of him, under similar circumstances, wouldn't you, Miss Landless?"

"Not under any circumstances," returned Helena

Jasper brought down his hands, looked over his shoulder, and begged to thank Miss Landless for her vindication of his character. Then he fell to dumbly playing, without striking the notes, while his little pupil was taken to an open window for air, and was otherwise petted and restored. When she was brought back, his place was empty "Jack's gone, Pussy," Edwin told her "I am more than half afraid he didn't like to be charged with being the Monster who had frightened you". But she answered never a word, and shivered, as if they had made her a little too cold

Miss Twinkleton now opining that indeed these were

late hours, Mrs Crisparkle, for finding ourselves outside the walls of the Nuns' House, and that we who undertook the formation of the future wives and mothers of England (the last words in a lower voice, as requiring to be communicated in confidence) were really bound (voice coming up again) to set a better example than one of rakish habits, wrappers were put in requisition, and the two young cavaliers volunteered to see the ladies home. It was soon done, and the gate of the Nuns' House closed upon them

The boarders had retired, and only Mrs Tisher in solitary vigil awaited the new pupil. Her bedroom being within Rosa's, very little introduction or explanation was necessary, before she was placed in charge of her new

friend, and left for the night

"This is a blessed relief, my dear," said Helena "I have been dreading all day, that I should be brought to bay at this time"

"There are not many of us," returned Rosa, "and we are good-natured girls, at least the others are, I can an-

swer for them "

"I can answer for you," laughed Helena, searching the lovely little face with her dark fiery eyes, and tenderly caressing the small figure "You will be a friend to me, won't you?"

"I hope so But the idea of my being a friend to you

seems too absurd, though "

" Why?"

"Oh, I am such a mite of a thing, and you are so womanly and handsome You seem to have resolution and power enough to crush me I shrink into nothing by the side of your presence even"

"I am a neglected creature, my dear, unacquainted with all accomplishments, sensitively conscious that I have everything to learn, and deeply ashamed to own my ignorance"

"And yet you acknowledge everything to me!" said Rosa

"My pretty one, can I help it? There is a fascination in you"

"Oh! is there, though?" pouted Rosa, half in jest and half in earnest. "What a pity Master Eddy doesn't feel it more!

Of course her relations towards that young gentleman had been already imparted in Minor Canon Corner

"Why, surely he must love you with all his heart!" cried Helena, with an earnestness that threatened to blaze into

ferocity if he didn't

"Eh? Oh, well, I suppose he does," said Rosa, pouting again, "I am sure I have no right to say he doesn't Perhaps it's my fault Perhaps I am not as nice to him as I ought to be I don't think I am But it as so ridiculous!"

Helena's eyes demanded what was

"We are," said Rosa, answering as if she had spoken "We are such a ridiculous couple" And we are always quarrelling"

"Why?"

"Because we both know we are ridiculous, my dear!"
Rosa gave that answer as if it were the most conclusive
answer in the world

Helena's masterful look was intent upon her face for a few moments, and then she impulsively put out both her hands and said —

"You will be my friend and help me?"

"Indeed, my dear, I will," replied Rosa, in a tone of affectionate childishness that went straight and true to her heart, "I will be as good a friend as such a mite of a thing can be to such a noble creature as you. And be a friend to me, please, I don't understand myself and I want a friend who can understand me, very much indeed."

Helena Landless kissed her, and retaining both her

hands said -

"Who is Mr Jasper?"

Rosa turned aside her head in answering "Eddy's uncle, and my music-master"

"You do not love him?"

"Ugh!" She put her hands up to her face, and shook with fear or horror

"You know that he loves you?"

"Oh, don't, don't, don't!" cried Rosa, dropping on her knees, and clinging to her new resource "Don't tell me of it! He terrifies me He haunts my thoughts, like a dreadful ghost I feel that I am never safe from him. I

feel as if he could pass in through the wall when he is spoken of "She actually did look round, as if she dreaded to see him standing in the shadow behind her

"Try to tell me more about it, darling"

"Yes, I will, I will Because you are so strong But hold me the while, and stay with me afterwards"

"My child! You speak as if he had threatened you in

some dark way"

"He has never spoken to me about—that Never"

"What has he done?"

"He has made a slave of me with his looks He has forced me to understand him, without his saying a word, and he has forced me to keep silence, without his uttering a threat When I play, he never moves his eyes from my hands When I sing, he never moves his eyes from my hips When he corrects me, and strikes a note, or a chord, or plays a passage, he himself is in the sounds, whispering that he pursues me as a lover, and commanding me to keep his secret I avoid his eyes, but he forces me to see them without looking at them Even when a glaze comes over them (which is sometimes the case), and he seems to wander away into a frightful sort of dream in which he threatens most, he obliges me to know it, and to know that he is sitting close at my side, more terrible to me than ever"

"What is this imagined threatening, pretty one? What

is threatened?"

"I don't know I have never even dared to think or wonder what it is"

"And was this all, to-night?"

"This was all, except that to-night when he watched my lips so closely as I was singing, besides feeling terrified I felt ashamed and passionately hurt. It was as if he kissed me, and I couldn't bear it, but cried out. You must never breathe this to any one. Eddy is devoted to him. But you said to-night that you would not be afraid of him, under any circumstances, and that gives me—who am so much afraid of him—courage to tell only you. Hold me! Stay with me! I am too frightened to be left by myself."

The lustrous gipsy-face drooped over the clinging arms and bosom, and the wild black hair fell down protectingly

over the childish form There was a slumbering gleam of fire in the intense dark eyes, though they were then softened with compassion and admiration Let whomsoever it most concerned look well to it

CHAPTER VIII

DAGGERS DRAWN

THE two young men, having seen the damsels, their charges, enter the courtyard of the Nuns' House, and finding themselves coldly stared at by the brazen door-plate, as if the battered old beau with the glass in his eye were insolent, look at one another, look along the perspective of the moonlit street, and slowly walk away together
"Do you stay here long, Mr Drood?" says Neville

"Not this time," is the careless answer "I leave for London again, to-morrow But I shall be here, off and on, until next Midsummer, then I shall take my leave of Cloisterham, and England too, for many a long day, I expect "

"Are you going abroad?"

"Going to wake up Egypt a little," is the condescending answer

"Are you reading?"

"Reading?" repeats Edwin Drood, with a touch of con-"No Doing, working, engineering My small patrimony was left a part of the capital of the Firm I am with, by my father, a former partner and I am a charge upon the Firm until I come of age, and then I step into my modest share in the concern Jack-you met him at dinner—is, until then, my guardian and trustee"
"I heard from Mr Crisparkle of your other good

fortune "

"What do you mean by my other good fortune?"
Neville has made his remark in a watchfully advancing, and yet furtive and shy manner, very expressive of that peculiar air already noticed, of being at once hunter and hunted Edwin has made his retort with an abruptness not at all polite They stop and interchange a rather heated look

"I hope," says Neville, "there is no offence, Mr Drood,

in my innocently referring to your betrothal?"

"By George!" cries Edwin, leading on again at a somewhat quicker pace, "everybody in this chattering old Cloisterham refers to it. I wonder no public-house has been set up, with my portrait for the sign of The Betrothed's Head. Or Pussy's portrait. One or the other"

"I am not accountable for Mr Crisparkle's mentioning

the matter to me, quite openly," Neville begins

"No, that's true, you are not," Edwin Drood assents

"But," resumes Neville, "I am accountable for mentioning it to you And I did so, on the supposition that you

could not fail to be highly proud of it"

Now, there are these two curious touches of human nature working the secret springs of this dialogue Neville Landless is already enough impressed by Little Rosebud, to feel indignant that Edwin Drood (far below her) should hold his prize so lightly Edwin Drood is already enough impressed by Helena, to feel indignant that Helena's brother (far below her) should dispose of him so coolly, and put him out of the way so entirely

However, the last remark had better be answered So,

says Edwin -

"I don't know, Mr Neville" (adopting that mode of address from Mr Crisparkle), "that what people are proudest of, they usually talk most about, I don't know either, that what they are proudest of, they most like other people to talk about But I live a busy life, and I speak under correction by you readers, who ought to know everything, and I dare say do"

By this time they had both become savage Mr Neville out in the open, Edwin Drood under the transparent cover of a popular tune, and a stop now and then to pretend to admire picturesque effects in the moonlight before him

"It does not seem to me very civil in you," remarks Neville, at length, "to reflect upon a stranger who comes here, not having had your advantages, to try to make up for lost time But to be sure, I was not brought up in 'busy life,' and my ideas of civility were formed among Heathens"

" Perhaps the best civility, whatever kind of people we are brought up among," retorts Edwin Drood, "is to mind our own business If you will set me that example, I promise to follow it "

"Do you know that you take a great deal too much upon yourself?" is the angry rejoinder, "and that in the part of the world I come from, you would be called to account for it?"

"By whom, for instance?" asks Edwin Drood, coming to a halt, and surveying the other with a look of disdain

But, here a startling right hand is laid on Edwin's shoulder, and Jasper stands between them For, it would seem that he too has strolled round by the Nuns' House, and has come up behind them on the shadowy side of the road

"Ned, Ned, Ned!" he says, "we must have no more of this I don't like this I have overheard high words bethis I don't like this I have overheard high words between you two Remember, my dear boy, you are almost in the position of host to-night. You belong, as it were, to the place, and in a manner represent it towards a stranger. Mr Neville is a stranger, and you should respect the obligations of hospitality. And, Mr Neville," laying his left hand on the inner shoulder of that young gentleman, and thus walking on between them, but I appeal to you to grove your tamper too. Never that peal to you to govern your temper too Now, what is amiss? But why ask! Let there be nothing amiss, and the question is superfluous We are all three on a good understanding, are we not?"

After a silent struggle between the two young men who shall speak last, Edwin Drood strikes in with "So far as

I am concerned, Jack, there is no anger in me"
"Nor in me," says Neville Landless, though not so freely; or perhaps so carelessly "But if Mr Drood knew all that hes behind me, far away from here, he might know better how it is that sharp-edged words have sharp edges to wound me"

"Perhaps," says Jasper, in a smoothing manner, "we had better not qualify our good understanding We had better not say anything having the appearance of a remonstrance or condition, it might not seem generous Frankly and freely, you see there is no anger in Ned Frankly and freely, there is no anger in you, Mr Neville?"

"None at all, Mr Jasper" Still, not quite so frankly or so freely, or, be it said once again, not quite so care-

lessly perhaps

"All over, then! Now, my bachelor gatehouse is a few yards from here, and the heater is on the fire, and the wine and glasses are on the table, and it is not a stone's throw from Minor Canon Corner Ned, you are up and away to-morrow We will carry Mr Neville in with us, to take a stirrup-cup"

"With all my heart, Jack"

"And with all mine, Mr Jasper" Neville feels it impossible to say less, but would rather not go He has an impression upon him that he has lost hold of his temper, feels that Edwin Drood's coolness, so far from being infectious, makes him red-hot

Mr Jasper, still walking in the centre, hand to shoulder on either side, beautifully turns the Refrain of a drinking song, and they all go up to his rooms. There, the first object visible, when he adds the light of a lamp to that of the fire, is the portrait over the chimney-piece. It is not an object calculated to improve the understanding between the two young men, as rather awkwardly reviving the subject of their difference. Accordingly, they both glance at it consciously, but say nothing. Jasper, however (who would appear from his conduct to have gained but an imperfect clue to the cause of their late high words), directly calls attention to it

"You recognize that picture, Mr Neville?" shading the

lamp to throw the light upon it

"I recognize it, but it is far from flattering the original"
"Oh, you are hard upon it! It was done by Ned, who

made me a present of it"

"I am sorry for that, Mr Drood" Neville apologizes with a real intention to apologize, "If I had known I wa in the artist's presence—"

"Oh, a joke, sir, a mere joke," Edwin cuts in, with a provoking yawn "A little humouring of Pussy's points! I'm going to paint her gravely, one of these days, if she's

good "

The air of leisurely patronage and indifference with which this is said, as the speaker throws himself back in a chair and clasps his hands at the back of his head, as a rest for it, is very exasperating to the excitable and excited Neville Jasper looks observantly from the one to the other, slightly smiles, and turns his back to mix a jug of mulled wine at the fire It seems to require much mixing and compounding

"I suppose, Mr Neville," says Edwin, quick to resent the indignant protest against himself in the face of young Landless, which is fully as visible as the portrait, or the fire, or the lamp "I suppose that if you painted the pic-

ture of your lady love-"

"I can't paint," is the hasty interruption

"That's your misfortune, and not your fault You would if you could But if you could, I suppose you would make her (no matter what she was in reality), Juno, Minerva, Diana, and Venus, all in one Eh?"

"I have no lady love, and I can't say "

"If I were to try my hand," says Edwin, with a boyish boastfulness getting up in him, "on a portrait of Miss Landless—in earnest, mind you, in earnest—you should see what I could do!"

"My seter's consent to sit for it being first got, I suppose? As it never will be got, I am afraid I shall never

see what you can do I must bear the loss "

Jasper turns round from the fire, fills a large goblet glass for Neville, fills a large goblet glass for Edwin, and hands each his own, then fills for himself, saying —

"Come, Mr Neville, we are to drink to my nephew, Ned As it is his foot that is in the stirrup—metaphorically—our stirrup-cup is to be devoted to him Ned, my dearest fellow, my love!"

Jasper sets the example of nearly emptying his glass, and Neville follows it Edwin Drood says, "Thank you both very much," and follows the double example

"Look at him," cried Jasper, stretching out his hand admiringly and tenderly, though rallyingly too "See where he lounges so easily, Mr Neville! The world is all before him where to choose A life of stirring work and interest, a life of change and excitement, a life of domestic ease and love! Look at him!"

Edwin Drood's face has become quickly and remarkably flushed with the wine, so has the face of Neville Landless Edwin still sits thrown back in his chair, making that rest

of clasped hands for his head

"See how little he heeds it all!" Jasper proceeds in a bantering vein "It is hardly worth his while to pluck the golden fruit that hangs ripe on the tree for him. And yet consider the contrast, Mr. Neville. You and I have no prospect of stirring work and interest, or of change and excitement, or of domestic ease and love. You and I have no prospect (unless you are more fortunate than I am, which may easily be), but the tedious unchanging round of this dull place."

"Upon my soul, Jack," says Edwin, complacently, "I feel quite apologetic for having my way smoothed as you describe But you know what I know, Jack, and it may not be so very easy as it seems, after all May it, Pussy?" To the portrait, with a snap of his thumb and finger "We have got to hit it off yet, haven't we, Pussy? You know

what I mean, Jack "

His speech has become thick and indistinct Jasper, quiet and self-possessed, looks to Neville, as expecting his answer or comment. When Neville speaks, his speech is also thick and indistinct

"It might have been better for Mr Drood to have

known some hardships," he says defiantly

"Pray," retorts Edwin, turning merely his eyes in that direction, "pray why might it have been better for Mr Drood to have known some hardships?"

"Ay," Jasper assents, with an air of interest, "let us

know why?"

"Because they might have made him more sensible," says Neville, "of good fortune that is not by any means necessarily the result of his own merits"

Mr Jasper quickly looks to his nephew for rejoinder. "Have you known hardships, may I ask?" says Edwin Drood, sitting upright

Mr Jasper quickly looks to the other for his retort.

"I have"

"And what have they made you sensible of?"

Mr Jasper's play of eyes between the two holds good throughout the dialogue, to the end

"I have told you once before to-night"
"You have done nothing of the sort"

"I tell you I have That you take a great deal too much upon yourself"

"You added something else to that, if I remember?"

"Yes, I did say something else"

"Say it again."

"I said that in the part of the world I come from, you would be called to account for it"

"Only there?" cried Edwin Drood, with a contemptuous laugh "A long way off, I believe? Yes, I see!

That part of the world is at a safe distance."

"Say here, then," rejoins the other, rising in a fury. "Say anywhere! Your vanity is intolerable, your conceit is beyond endurance, you talk as if you were some rare and precious prize, instead of a common boaster. You are a common fellow, and a common boaster."

"Pooh, pooh," says Edwin Drood, equally furious, but more collected, "how should you know? You may know a black common fellow, or a black common boaster, when you see him (and no doubt you have a large acquaintance that many hard and a large acquaintance

that way), but you are no judge of white men."

This insulting allusion to his dark skin infuriates Neville to that violent degree, that he flings the dregs of his wine at Edwin Drood, and is in the act of flinging the goblet after it, when his arm is caught in the nick of time by

Jasper

"Ned, my dear fellow!" he cries in a loud voice, "I entreat you, I command you, to be still!" There has been a rush of all the three, and a clattering of glasses and overturning of chairs "Mr Neville, for shame! Give this glass to me Open your hand, sir. I will have it!"

But Neville throws him off, and pauses for an instant, in a raging passion, with the goblet yet in his uplifted hand Then, he dashes it down under the grate, with such force that the broken splinters fly out again in a shower, and he leaves the house

When he first emerges into the night air, nothing around him is still or steady, nothing around him shows like what it is, he only knows that he stands with a bare head in the midst of a blood-red whirl, waiting to be struggled with, and to struggle to the death

But, nothing happening, and the moon looking down upon him as if he were dead after a fit of wrath, he holds his steam-hammer-beating head and heart, and staggers away. Then, he becomes half-conscious of having heard himself bolted and barred out, like a dangerous animal, and thinks what shall he do?

Some wildly passionate ideas of the river dissolve under the spell of the moonlight on the Cathedral and the graves, and the remembrance of his sister, and the thought of what he owes to the good man who has but that very day won his confidence and given him his pledge He repairs to Minor Canon Corner, and knocks softly at the door

It is Mr Crisparkle's custom to sit up last of the early household, very softly touching his piano and practising his favourite parts in concerted vocal music. The south wind that goes where it lists, by way of Minor Canon Corner on a still night, is not more subdued than Mr Crisparkle at such times, regardful of the slumbers of the china shepherdess

His knock is immediately answered by Mr Crisparkle himself When he opens the door, candle in hand, his cheerful face falls, and disappointed amazement is in it

"Mr. Neville! In this disorder! Where have you been?"

"I have been to Mr Jasper's, sir With his nephew"

" Come in "

The Minor Canon props him by the elbow with a strong hand (in a strictly scientific manner worthy of his morning trainings) and turns him into his own little book-room, and shuts the door.

EDWIN DROOD

"I have begun ill, sir I have begun dreadfully ill"

"Too true You are not sober, Mr Neville"

"I am afraid I am not, sir, though I can satisfy you at another time that I have had a very little indeed to drink, and that it overcame me in the strangest and most sudden manner"

"Mr Neville, Mr Neville," says the Minor Canon, shaking his head with a sorrowful smile, "I have heard that said before"

"I think—my mind is much confused, but I think—it is equally true of Mr Jasper's nephew, sir"

"Very likely," is the dry rejoinder

"We quarrelled, sir He insulted me most grossly He had heated that tigerish blood I told you of to-day, before then"

"Mr Neville," rejoins the Minor Canon, mildly, but firmly "I request you not to speak to me with that

clenched right hand Unclench it, if you please"

"He goaded me, sir," pursues the young man, instantly obeying, "beyond my power of endurance I cannot say whether or no he meant it at first, but he did it He certainly meant it at last In short, sir," with an irrepressible outburst, "in the passion into which he lashed me, I would have cut him down if I could, and I tried to do it"

"You have clenched that hand again," is Mr Crisparkle's quiet commentary

"I beg your pardon, sir"

"You know your room, for I showed it you before dinner, but I will accompany you to it once more Your arm, if

you please Softly, for the house is all abed "

Scooping his hand into the same scientific elbow-rest as before, and backing it up with the inert strength of his arm, as skilfully as a Police Expert, and with an apparent repose quite unattainable by novices, Mr Crisparkle conducts his pupil to the pleasant and orderly old room pre pared for him Arrived there, the young man throws himself into a chair, and, flinging his arms upon his readingtable, rests his head upon them with an air of wretched self-reproach

The gentle Minor Canon has had it in his thoughts to

leave the room, without a word But looking round at the door, and seeing this dejected figure, he turns back to it, touches it with a mild hand, and says "Good-night!" A sob is his only acknowledgment. He might have had many a worse, perhaps, could have had few better

Another soft knock at the outer door attracts his attention as he goes down-stairs He opens it to Mr Jasper,

holding in his hand the pupil's hat

"We have had an awful scene with him," says Jasper, in a low voice

"Has it been so bad as that?"

"Murderous!"

Mr Crisparkle remonstrates "No, no, no Do not use such strong words"

"He might have laid my dear boy dead at my feet It is no fault of his, that he did not But that I was, through the mercy of God, swift and strong with him, he would have cut him down on my hearth"

The phrase smites home "Ah!" thinks Mr Crisparkle,

"his own words!"

- "Seeing what I have seen to-night, and hearing what I have heard," adds Jasper, with great earnestness, "I shall never know peace of mind when there is danger of those two coming together, with no one else to interfere. It was horrible. There is something of the tiger in his dark blood."
 - "Ah!" thinks Mr Crisparkle, "so he said!"

"You, my dear sir," pursues Jasper, taking his hand, "even you, have accepted a dangerous charge"

"You need have no fear for me, Jasper," returns Mr Crisparkle, with a quiet smile "I have none for myself"

"Î have none for myself," returns Jasper, with an emphasis on the last pronoun, "because I am not, nor am I in the way of being, the object of his hostility But you may be, and my dear boy has been Good-night!"

Mr Crisparkle goes in, with the hat that has so easily, so almost imperceptibly, acquired the right to be hung up in his hall, hangs it up, and goes thoughtfully to bed

EDWIN DROOD.

CHAPTER IX.

BIRDS IN THE BUSH

Rosa, having no relation that she knew of in the world, had, from the seventh year of her age, known no home but the Nuns' House, and no mother but Miss Twinkleton Her remembrance of her own mother was of a pretty little creature like herself (not much older than herself it seemed to her), who had been brought home in her father's arms. drowned The fatal accident had happened at a party of pleasure Every fold and colour in the pretty summer dress, and even the long wet hair, with scattered petals of ruined flowers still clinging to it, as the dead young figure, in its sad, sad beauty lay upon the bed, were fixed indelibly in Rosa's recollection. So were the wild despair and the subsequent bowed-down grief of her poor young father, who died broken-hearted on the first anniversary of that hard day

The betrothal of Rosa grew out of the soothing of his year of mental distress by his fast friend and old college companion, Drood, who likewise had been left a widower in his youth. But he, too, went the silent road into which all earthly pilgrimages merge, some sooner, and some later, and thus the young couple had come to be as they

were

The atmosphere of pity surrounding the little orphan girl when she first came to Cloisterham, had never cleared away. It had taken brighter hues as she grew older, happier, prettier, now it had been golden, now roseate, and now azure, but it had always adorned her with some soft light of its own. The general desire to console and caress her, had caused her to be treated in the beginning as a child much younger than her years, the same desire had caused her to be still petted when she was a child no longer. Who should be her favourite, who should anticipate this or that small present, or do her this or that small service, who should take her home for the holidays, who should write to her the oftenest when they were separated,

and whom she would most rejoice to see again when they were reunited, even these gentle rivalries were not without their slight dashes of bitterness in the Nuns' House. Well for the poor nuns in their day, if they hid no harder strife under their veils and rosaries!

Thus Rosa had grown to be an amiable, giddy, wilful, winning, little creature, spoilt, in the sense of counting upon kindness from all around her, but not in the sense of repaying it with indifference. Possessing an exhaustless well of affection in her nature, its sparkling waters had freshened and brightened the Nuns' House for years, and yet its depths had never yet been moved what might betide when that came to pass, what developing changes might fall upon the heedless head, and light heart, then, remained to be seen.

By what means the news that there had been a quarrel between the two young men overnight, involving even some kind of onslaught by Mr. Neville upon Edwin Drood. got into Miss Twinkleton's establishment before breakfast. it is impossible to say. Whether it was brought in by the birds of the air, or came blowing in with the very air itself, when the casement windows were set open; whether the baker brought it kneaded into the bread, or the milkman delivered it as part of the adulteration of his milk; or the housemaids, beating the dust out of their mats against the gateposts, received it in exchange deposited on the mats by the town atmosphere, certain it is that the news permeated every gable of the old building before Miss Twinkleton was down, and that Miss Twinkleton herself received it through Mrs Tisher, while yet in the act of dressing, or (as she might have expressed the phrase to a parent or guardian of a mythological turn) of sacrificing to the Graces

Miss Landless's brother had thrown a bottle at Mr. Edwin Drood.

Miss Landless's brother had thrown a knife at Mr. Edwin Drood

A knife became suggestive of a fork, and Miss Landless's brother had thrown a fork at Mr Edwin Drood

As in the governing precedence of Peter Piper, alleged

to have picked the peck of pickled pepper, it was held physically desirable to have evidence of the existence of the peck of pickled pepper which Peter Piper was alleged to have picked, so, in this case, it was held psychologically important to know why Miss Landless's brother threw a bottle, knife, or fork—or bottle, knife, and fork—for the cook had been given to understand it was all three—at Mr Edwin Drood?

Well, then Miss Landless's brother had said he admired Miss Bud Mr Edwin Drood had said to Miss Landless's brother that he had no business to admire Miss Bud Miss Landless's brother had then "up'd" (this was the cook's exact information) with the bottle, knife, fork, and decanter (the decanter now coolly flying at everybody's head, without the least introduction), and thrown them all at Mr Edwin Drood

Poor little Rosa put a forefinger into each of her ears when these rumours began to circulate, and retired into a corner, beseeching not to be told any more, but Miss Landless, begging permission of Miss Twinkleton to go and speak with her brother, and pretty plainly showing that she would take it if it were not given, struck out the more definite course of going to Mr Crisparkle's for

accurate intelligence

When she came back (being first closeted with Miss Twinkleton, in order that anything objectionable in her tidings might be retained by that discreet filter), she imparted to Rosa only, what had taken place, dwelling with a flushed cheek on the provocation her brother had received, but almost limiting it to that last gross affront as crowning "some other words between them," and, out of consideration for her new friend, passing lightly over the fact that the other words had originated in her lover's taking things in general so very easily To Rosa direct, she brought a petition from her brother that she would forgive him, and, having delivered it with sisterly earnestness, made an end of the subject

It was reserved for Miss Twinkleton to tone down the public mind of the Nuns' House That lady, therefore, entering in a stately manner what plebeians might have

called the school-room, but what, in the patrician language of the head of the Nuns' House, was euphuistically, not to say round-aboutedly, denominated "the apartment allotted to study," and saying with a forensic air, "Ladies!" all rose Mrs Tisher at the same time grouped herself behind her chief, as representing Queen Elizabeth's first historical female friend at Tilbury Fort Miss Twinkleton then proceeded to remark that Rumour, Ladies, had been represented by the bard of Avon—needless were it to mention the immortal Shakespeare, also called the Swan of his native river, not improbably with some reference to the ancient superstition that that bird of graceful plumage (Miss Jennings will please stand upright) sang sweetly on the approach of death, for which we have no ornithological authority, — Rumour, Ladies, had been represented by that bard—hem!—

"who drew The celebrated Jew,"

as painted full of tongues Rumour in Cloisterham (Miss Ferdinand will honour me with her attention) was no exception to the great limner's portrait of Rumour elsewhere A slight fracas between two young gentlemen occurring last night within a hundred miles of these peaceful walls (Miss Ferdinand, being apparently incorrigible, will have the kindness to write out this evening, in the original language, the first four fables of our vivacious neighbour, Monsieur La Fontaine) had been very grossly exaggerated by Rumour's voice In the first alarm and anxiety arising from our sympathy with a sweet young friend, not wholly to be dissociated from one of the gladiators in the bloodless arena in question (the impropriety of Miss Reynolds's appearing to stab herself in the band with a pin, is far too obvious, and too glaringly unlady-like, to be pointed out), we descended from our maiden elevation to discuss this uncongenial and this unfit theme Responsible inquiries having assured us that it was but one of those "airy nothings," pointed at by the Poet (whose name and date of birth Miss Giggles will supply within half an hour), we would now discard the subject, and concentrate our minds upon the grateful labours of the day

But the subject so survived all day, nevertheless, that Miss Ferdinand got into new trouble by surreptitiously clapping on a paper moustache at dinner-time, and going through the motions of aiming a water-bottle at Miss Gig-

gles, who drew a table-spoon in defence

Now, Rosa thought of this unlucky quarrel a great deal, and thought of it with an uncomfortable feeling that she was involved in it, as cause, or consequence, or what not, through being in a false position altogether as to her marriage engagement. Never free from such uneasiness when she was with her affianced husband, it was not likely that she would be free from it when they were apart. Today, too, she was cast in upon herself, and deprived of the relief of talking freely with her new friend, because the quarrel had been with Helena's brother, and Helena undisguisedly avoided the subject as a delicate and difficult one to herself. At this critical time, of all times, Rosa's guardian was announced as having come to see her

Mr. Grewgious had been well selected for his trust, as a man of incorruptible integrity, but certainly for no other appropriate quality discernible on the surface. He was an arid, sandy man, who, if he had been put into a grinding-mill, looked as if he would have ground immediately into high-dried snuff. He had a scanty flat crop of hair, in colour and consistency like some very mangy yellow fur tippet, it was so unlike hair, that it must have been a wig, but for the stupendous improbability of anybody's voluntarily sporting such a head. The little play of feature that his face presented, was cut deep into it, in a few hard curves that made it more like work, and he had certain notches in his forehead, which looked as though Nature had been about to touch them into sensibility or refinement, when she had impatiently thrown away the chisel, and said. "I really cannot be worried to finish off this man, let him go as he is."

With too great length of throat at his upper end, and too much ankle-bone and heel at his lower, with an awkward and hesitating manner, with a shambling walk, and with what is called a near sight—which perhaps prevented his observing how much white cotton stocking he displayed

to the public eye, in contrast with his black suit—Mr Grewgious still had some strange capacity in him of mak-

ing on the whole an agreeable impression

Mr Grewgious was discovered by his ward, much discomforted by being in Miss Twinkleton's company in Miss Twinkleton's own sacred room. Dim forebodings of being examined in something, and not coming well out of it, seemed to oppress the poor gentleman when found in these circumstances.

"My dear, how do you do? I am glad to see you My dear, how much improved you are Permit me to hand

you a chair, my dear "

Miss Twinkleton rose at her little writing-table, saying, with general sweetness, as to the polite Universe "Will you permit me to retire?"

"By no means, madam, on my account I beg that you

will not move"

"I must entreat permission to move," returned Miss Twinkleton, repeating the word with a charming grace, "but I will not withdraw, since you are so obliging If I wheel my desk to this corner window, shall I be in the way?"

"Madam! In the way!"
"You are very kind —Rosa, my dear, you will be under

no restraint, I am sure "

Here Mr Grewgious, left by the fire with Rosa, said again "My dear, how do you do? I am glad to see you, my dear" And having waited for her to sit down, sat down himself

"My visits," said Mr Grewgious, "are, like those of the angels—not that I compare myself to an angel."

"No, sir," said Rosa

"Not by any means," assented Mr Grewgious "I merely refer to my visits, which are few and far between The angels are, we know very well, up-stairs"

Miss Twinkleton looked round with a kind of stiff stare "I refer, my dear," said Mr Grewgious, laying his hand

on Rosa's, as the possibility thrilled through his frame of his otherwise seeming to take the awful liberty of calling Miss Twinkleton my dear, "I refer to the other young ladies."

Miss Twinkleton resumed her writing

Mr Grewgious, with a sense of not having managed his opening point quite as neatly as he might have desired, smoothed his head from back to front as if he had just dived, and were pressing the water out—this smoothing action, however superfluous, was habitual with him—and took a pocket-book from his coat-pocket, and a stump of black-lead pencil from his waistcoat-pocket

"I made," he said, turning the leaves "I made a guiding memorandum or so—as I usually do, for I have no conversational powers whatever—to which I will, with your permission, my dear, refer 'Well and happy' Truly

You are well and happy, my dear? You look so "

"Yes, indeed, sir," answered Rosa

"For which," said Mr Grewgious, with a bend of his head towards the corner window, "our warmest acknowledgments are due, and I am sure are rendered, to the maternal kindness and the constant care and consideration of the lady whom I have now the honour to see before me"

This point, again, made but a lame departure from Mr Grewgious, and never got to its destination, for, Miss Twinkleton, feeling that the courtesies required her to be by this time quite outside the conversation, was biting the end of her pen, and looking upward, as waiting for the descent of an idea from any member of the Celestial Nine who might have one to spare

Mr Grewgious smoothed his smooth head again, and then made another reference to his pocket-book, lining out

"well and happy," as disposed of

"'Pounds, shillings, and pence,' is my next note A dry subject for a young lady, but an important subject too Life is pounds, shillings, and pence Death is——" A sudden recollection of the death of her two parents seemed to stop him, and he said in a softer tone, and evidently inserting the negative as an after-thought "Death is not pounds, shillings, and pence"

His voice was as hard and dry as himself, and Fancy might have ground it straight, like himself, into high-dried snuff. And yet, through the very limited means of expression that he possessed, he seemed to express kindness. If

Nature had but finished him off, kindness might have been recognizable in his face at this moment. But if the notches in his forehead wouldn't fuse together, and if his face would work and couldn't play, what could he do, poor man!

"'Pounds, shillings, and pence' You find your allowance always sufficient for your wants, my dear?"

Rosa wanted for nothing, and therefore it was ample

"And you are not in debt?"

Rosa laughed at the idea of being in debt—It seemed, to her inexperience, a comical vagary of the imagination Mr Grewgious stretched his near sight to be sure that this was her view of the case—"Ah!" he said, as comment, with a furtive glance towards Miss Twinkleton, and lining out pounds, shillings, and pence—"I spoke of having got among the angels! So I did!"

Rosa felt what his next memorandum would prove to be, and was blushing and folding a crease in her dress with

one embarrassed hand, long before he found it

"'Marriage' Hem!" Mr Grewgious carried his smoothing hand down over his eyes and nose, and even chin, before drawing his chair a little nearer, and speaking a little more confidentially "I now touch, my dear, upon the point that is the direct cause of my troubling you with the present visit. Otherwise, being a particularly Angular man, I should not have intruded here. I am the last man to intrude into a sphere for which I am so entirely unfitted. I feel, on these premises, as if I was a bear—with the cramp—in a youthful Cotillon"

His ungainliness gave him enough of the air of his simile

to set Rosa off laughing heartily

"It strikes you in the same light," said Mr Grewgious, with perfect calmness "Just so To return to my memorandum Mr Edwin has been to and fro here, as was arranged You have mentioned that, in your quarterly letters to me And you like him, and he likes you"

"I like him very much, sir," rejoined Rosa

"So I said, my dear," returned her guardian, for whose ear the timid emphasis was much too fine "Good And you correspond"

"We write to one another," said Rosa, pouting, as she

recalled their epistolary differences

"Such is the meaning that I attach to the word 'correspond' in this application, my dear," said Mr Grewgious "Good All goes well, time works on, and at this next Christmas time it will become necessary, as a matter of form, to give the exemplary lady in the corner window, to whom we are so much indebted, business notice of your departure in the ensuing half-year. Your relations with her are far more than business relations, no doubt, but a residue of business remains in them, and business is business ever. I am a particularly Angular man," proceeded Mr Grewgious, as if it suddenly occurred to him to mention it, "and I am not used to give anything away. If, for these two reason, some competent Proxy would give you away, I should take it very kindly"

Rosa intimated, with her eyes on the ground, that she

thought a substitute might be found, if required

"Surely, surely," said Mr Grewgious "For instance, the gentleman who teaches Dancing here—he would know how to do it with graceful propriety He would advance and retire in a manner satisfactory to the feelings of the officiating clergyman, and of yourself, and the bridegroom, and all parties concerned I am—I am a particularly Angular man," said Mr Grewgious, as if he had made up his mind to screw it out at last "and should only blunder"

Rosa sat still and silent Perhaps her mind had not got quite so far as the ceremony yet, but was lagging on the

way there

"Memorandum, 'Will' Now, my dear," said Mr Grewgious, referring to his notes, disposing of "Marriage" with his pencil, and taking a paper from his pocket "although I have before possessed you with the contents of your father's will, I think it right at this time to leave a certified copy of it in your hands And although Mr Edwin is also aware of its contents, I think it right at this time likewise to place a certified copy of it in Mr Jasper's hand——"

"Not in his own!" asked Rosa, looking up quickly.

"Cannot the copy go to Eddy himself?"

"Why, yes, my dear, if you particularly wish it, but I

spoke of Mr Jasper as being his trustee "

"I do particularly wish it, if you please," said Rosa, hurriedly and earnestly, "I don't like Mr Jasper to come between us, in any way"

"It is natural, I suppose," said Mr Grewgious, "that your young husband should be all in all. Yes. You observe that I say, I suppose. The fact is, I am a particularly Unnatural man, and I don't know from my own knowledge."

Rosa looked at him with some wonder

"I mean," he explained, "that young ways were never I was the only offspring of parents far advanced in life, and I half believe I was born advanced in life myself No personality is intended towards the name you will so soon change, when I remark that while the general growth of people seem to have come into existence, buds, I seem to have come into existence a chip I was a chip -and a very dry one-when I first became aware of mv-Respecting the other certified copy, your wish shall be complied with Respecting your inheritance, I think you know all It is an annuity of two hundred and fifty pounds The savings upon that annuity, and some other items to your credit, all duly carried to account, with vouchers, will place you in possession of a lump-sum of money, rather exceeding Seventeen Hundred Pounds I am empowered to advance the cost of your preparations for your marriage out of that fund All is told"

"Will you please tell me," said Rosa, taking the paper with a prettily knitted brow, but not opening it "whether I am right in what I am going to say? I can understand what you tell me, so very much better than what I read in law-writings My poor papa and Eddy's father made their agreement together, as very dear and firm and fast friends, in order that we, too, might be very dear and firm and fast

friends after them?"

"Tust so"

"For the lasting good of both of us, and the lasting happiness of both of us?"

"Tust so."

"That we might be to one another even much more than they had been to one another?"

"Tust so"

"It was not bound upon Eddy, and it was not bound

upon me, by any forfeit, in case-"

"Don't be agitated, my dear In the case that it brings tears into your affectionate eyes even to picture to yourself—in the case of your not marrying one another—no, no forfeiture on either side You would then have been my ward until you were of age No worse would have befallen you Bad enough perhaps!"

"And Eddy?"

"He would have come into his partnership derived from his father, and into its arrears to his credit (if any), on

attaining his majority, just as now"

Rosa, with her perplexed face and knitted brow, bit the corner of her attested copy, as she sat with her head on one side, looking abstractedly on the floor, and smoothing it with her foot

"In short," said Mr Grewgious, "this betrothal is a wish, a sentiment, a friendly project, tenderly expressed on both That it was strongly felt, and that there was a lively hope that it would prosper, there can be no doubt When you were both children, you began to be accustomed to it, and it has prospered But circumstances alter cases, and I made this visit to-day, partly, indeed principally, to discharge myself of the duty of telling you, my dear, that two young people can only be betrothed in marriage (except as a matter of convenience, and therefore mockery and misery) of their own free will, their own attachment, and their own assurance (it may or it may not prove a mistaken one, but we must take our chance of that), that they are suited to each other, and will make each other happy Is it to be supposed, for example, that if either of your fathers were living now, and had any mistrust on that subject, his mind would not be changed by the change of circumstances involved in the change of your years? Untenable, unreasonable, inconclusive, and preposterous!"

Mr Grewgious said all this, as if he were reading it aloud, or, still more, as if he were repeating a lesson. So

expressionless of any approach to spontaneity were his face and manner

"I have now, my dear," he added, blurring out "Will" with his pencil, "discharged myself of what is doubtless a formal duty in this case, but still a duty in such a case Memorandum, 'Wishes' My dear, is there any wish of yours that I can further'"

Rosa shook her head, with an almost plaintive air of hesitation in want of help

"Is there any instruction that I can take from you with reference to your affairs?"

"I-I should like to settle them with Eddy first, if you

please," said Rosa, plaiting the crease in her dress

"Surely, surely," returned Mr Grewgious "You two should be of one mind in all things Is the young gentleman expected shortly?"

"He has gone away only this morning He will be back

at Christmas"

"Nothing could happen better You will, on his return at Christmas, arrange all matters of detail with him, you will then communicate with me, and I will discharge myself (as a mere business acquittance) of my business responsibilities towards the accomplished lady in the corner window They will accrue at that season" Blurring pencil once again "Memorandum, 'Leave' Yes I will now, my dear, take my leave"

"Could I," said Rosa, rising, as he jerked out of his chair in his ungainly way "could I ask you, most kindly to come to me at Christmas, if I had anything particular

to say to you?"

"Why, certainly, certainly," he rejoined, apparently—if such a word can be used of one who had no apparent lights or shadows about him—complimented by the question "As a particularly Angular man, I do not fit smoothly into the social circle, and consequently I have no other engagement at Christmas-time than to partake, on the twenty-fifth, of a boiled turkey and celery sauce with a—with a particularly Angular clerk I have the good fortune to possess, whose father, being a Norfolk farmer, sends him up (the turkey up), as a present to me, from the neigh-

bourhood of Norwich I should be quite proud of your wishing to see me, my dear As a professional Receiver of rents, so very few people do wish to see me, that the novelty would be bracing"

For his ready acquiescence, the grateful Rosa put her hands upon his shoulders, stood on tiptoe, and instantly

kissed him

"Lord bless me!" cried Mr Grewgious "Thank you, my dear! The honour is almost equal to the pleasure Miss Twinkleton, madam, I have had a most satisfactory conversation with my ward, and I will now release you from the incumbrance of my presence"

"Nay, sir," rejoined Miss Twinkleton, rising with a gracious condescension "say not incumbrance Not so,

by any means I cannot permit you to say so"

"Thank you, madam I have read in the newspapers," said Mr Grewgious, stammering a little, "that when a distinguished visitor (not that I am one far from it) goes to a school (not that this is one far from it), he asks for a holiday, or some sort of grace. It being now the afternoon in the—College—of which you are the eminent head, the young ladies might gain nothing, except in name, by having the rest of the day allowed them. But if there is any young lady at all under a cloud, might I solicit——"

"Ah, Mr Grewgious, Mr Grewgious!" cried Miss Twinkleton, with a chastely-rallying forefinger "Oh, you gentlemen, you gentlemen! Fie for shame, that you are so hard upon us poor maligned disciplinarians of our sex, for your sakes! But as Miss Ferdinand is at present weighed down by an incubus"—Miss Twinkleton might have said a pen-and-ink-ubus of writing out Monsieur La Fontaine—"go to her, Rosa my dear, and tell her the penalty is remitted, in deference to the intercession of your guardian, Mr Grewgious"

Miss Twinkleton here achieved a curtsey, suggestive of marvels happening to her respected legs, and which she came out of nobly, three yards behind her starting-

point

As he held it incumbent upon him to call on Mr Jasper before leaving Cloisterham, Mr Grewgious went to the

gatehouse, and climbed its postern stair But Mr Jasper's door being closed, and presenting on a slip of paper the word "Cathedral," the fact of its being service-time was borne into the mind of Mr Grewgious So he descended the stair again, and, crossing the Close, paused at the great western folding-door of the Cathedral, which stood open on the fine and bright, though short-lived, afternoon, for the airing of the place

"Dear me," said Mr Grewgious, peeping in, "it's like looking down the throat of Old Time"

Old Time heaved a mouldy sigh from tomb and arch and vault, and gloomy shadows began to deepen in corners, and damps began to rise from green patches of stone, and jewels, cast upon the pavement of the nave from stained glass by the declining sun, began to perish Within the grill-gate of the chancel, up the steps surmounted loomingly by the fast-darkening organ, white robes could be dimly seen, and one feeble voice, rising and falling in a cracked monotonous mutter, could at intervals be faintly heard In the free outer air, the river, the green pastures, and the brown arable lands, the teeming hills and dales, were reddened by the sunset while the distant little windows in windmills and farm homesteads, shone, patches of bright beaten gold In the Cathedral, all became grey, murky, and sepulchral, and the cracked monotonous mutter went on like a dying voice until the organ and the choir burst forth, and drowned it in a sea of music Then, the sea fell, and the dying voice made another feeble effort, and then the sea rose high, and beat its life out, and lashed the roof, and surged among the arches, and pierced the heights of the great tower, and then the sea was dry, and all was still

Mr Grewgious had by that time walked to the chancel-

steps, where he met the living waters coming out
"Nothing is the matter?" Thus Jasper accosted him,
rather quickly "You have not been sent for?"

"Not at all, not at all I came down of my own accord I have been to my pretty ward's, and am now homeward bound again "

"You found her thriving?"

"Blooming indeed Most blooming I merely came to tell her, seriously, what a betrothal by deceased parents is"

"And what is it-according to your judgment?"

Mr Grewgious noticed the whiteness of the lips that asked the question, and put it down to the chilling account of the Cathedral

"I merely came to tell her that it could not be considered binding, against any such reason for its dissolution as a want of affection, or want of disposition to carry it into effect, on the side of either party"

"May I ask, had you any special reason for telling her

that?"

Mr Grewgious answered somewhat sharply "The especial reason of doing my duty, sir Simply that" Then he added "Come, Mr Jasper, I know your affection for your nephew, and that you are quick to feel on his behalf I assure you that this implies not the least doubt of, or disrespect to, your nephew"

"You could not," returned Jasper, with a friendly pressure of his arm, as they walked on side by side, "speak

more handsomely"

Mr Grewgious pulled off his hat to smooth his head, and, having smoothed it, nodded it contentedly, and put

his hat on again

"I will wager," said Jasper, smiling—his lips were still so white that he was conscious of it, and bit and moistened them while speaking "I will wager that she hinted no wish to be released from Ned"

"And you will win your wager, if you do," retorted Mr Grewgious "We should allow some margin for little maidenly delicacies in a young motherless creature, under such circumstances, I suppose, it is not in my line, what do you think?"

"There can be no doubt of it"

"I am glad you say so Because," proceeded Mr Grewgrous, who had all this time very knowingly felt his way round to action on his remembrance of what she had said of Jasper himself "because she seems to have some little delicate instinct that all preliminary arrangements had best be made between Mr Edwin Drood and herself, don't you see? She don't want us, don't you know?"

Jasper touched himself on the breast, and said, some-

what indistinctly "You mean me"

Mr Grewgious touched himself on the breast, and said "I mean us" Therefore, let them have their little discussions and councils together, when Mr Edwin Drood comes back here at Christmas, and then you and I will step in, and put the final touches to the business"

"So, you settled with her that you would come back at Christmas?" observed Jasper "I see! Mr Grewgious, as you quite fairly said just now, there is such an exceptional attachment between my nephew and me, that I am more sensitive for the dear, fortunate, happy, happy fellow than for myself But it is only right that the young lady should be considered, as you have pointed out, and that I should accept my cue from you I accept it I understand that at Christmas they will complete their preparations for May, and that their marriage will be put in final train by themselves, and that nothing will remain for us but to put ourselves in train also, and have everything ready for our formal release from our trusts, on Edwin's birthday"

formal release from our trusts, on Edwin's birthday"
"That is my understanding," assented Mr Grewgious,
as they shook hands to part "God bless them both!"

"God save them both!" cried Jasper

"I said, bless them," remarked the former, looking back over his shoulder

"I said, save them," returned the latter "Is there any difference?"

CHAPTER X

SMOOTHING THE WAY

It has been often enough remarked that women have a curious power of divining the characters of men, which would seem to be innate and instinctive, seeing that it is arrived at through no patient process of reasoning, that it can give no satisfactory or sufficient account of itself, and

that it pronounces in the most confident manner, even against accumulated observation on the part of the other sex. But it has not been quite so often remarked that this power (fallible, like every other human attribute) is for the most part absolutely incapable of self-revision, and that when it has delivered an adverse opinion which by all human lights is subsequently proved to have failed, it is undistinguishable from prejudice, in respect of its determination not to be corrected. Nay, the very possibility of contradiction or disproof, however remote, communicates to this feminine judgment from the first, in nine cases out of ten, the weakness attendant on the testimony of an interested witness, so personally and strongly does the fair diviner connect herself with her divination

"Now, don't you think, Ma dear," said the Minor Canon to his mother one day as she sat at hei knitting in his little book-room, "that you are rather hard on Mr

Neville?"

"No, I do not, Sept," returned the old lady

"Let us discuss it, Ma"

"I have no objection to discuss it, Sept. I trust, my dear, I am always open to discussion" There was a vibration in the old lady's cap, as though she internally added. "and I should like to see the discussion that would change my mind!"

"Very good, Ma," said her conciliatory son "There

is nothing like being open to discussion"

"I hope not, my dear," returned the old lady, evidently shut to it

"Well! Mr Neville, on that unfortunate occasion, commits himself under provocation"

"And under mulled wine," added the old lady

"I must admit the wine Though I believe the two young men were much alike in that regard"

"I don't," said the old lady

"Why not, Ma?"

'Because I don't," said the old lady "Still, I am quite open to discussion,"

"But, my dear Ma, I cannot see how we are to discuss,

if you take that line "

"Blame Mr Neville for it, Sept, and not me," said the old lady, with stately severity

"My dear Ma! why Mr Neville?"

"Because," said Mrs Crisparkle, retiring on first principles, "he came home intoxicated, and did great discredit to this house, and showed great disrespect to this family"

"That is not to be denied, Ma He was then, and he

is now, very sorry for it "

"But for Mr Jasper's well-bred consideration in coming up to me, next day, after service, in the Nave itself, with his gown still on, and expressing his hope that I had not been greatly alarmed or had my rest violently broken, I believe I might never have heard of this disgraceful transaction," said the old lady

"To be candid, Ma, I think I should have kept it from you if I could though I had not decidedly made up my mind I was following Jasper out, to confer with him on the subject, and to consider the expediency of his and my jointly hushing the thing up on all accounts, when I found

him speaking to you Then it was too late"

"Too late, indeed, Sept He was still as pale as gentlemanly ashes at what had taken place in his rooms

overnight"

"If I had kept it from you, Ma, you may be sure it would have been for your peace and quiet, and for the good of the young men, and in my best discharge of my duty according to my lights"

The old lady immediately walked across the room and kissed him saying, "Of course, my dear Sept, I am sure

of that "

"However, it became the town-talk," said Mr Crisparkle, rubbing his ear, as his mother resumed her seat,

and her knitting, "and passed out of my power"

"And I said then, Sept," returned the old lady, "that I thought ill of Mr Neville And I say now, that I think ill of Mr Neville And I said then, and I say now, that I hope Mr Neville may come to good, but I don't believe he will "Here the cap vibrated again considerably.

"I am sorry to hear you say so, Ma---"

"I am sorry to say so, my dear," interposed the old

lady, knitting on firmly, "but I can't help it"
"—For," pursued the Minor Canon, "it is undeniable that Mr Neville is exceedingly industrious and attentive, and that he improves apace, and that he has-I hope I may say-an attachment to me"

"There is no ment in the last article, my dear," said the old lady, quickly, "and if he says there is, I think

the worse of him for the boast"

"But, my dear Ma, he never said there was"

"Perhaps not," returned the old lady, "still, I don't

see that it greatly signifies "

There was no impatience in the pleasant look with which Mr Crisparkle contemplated the pretty old piece of china as it knitted, but there was, certainly, a humorous sense of its not being a piece of china to argue with very closely

"Besides, Sept, ask yourself what he would be without his sister You know what an influence she has over him, you know what a capacity she has, you know that whatever he reads with you, he reads with her Give her her fair share of your praise, and how much do you leave for him?"

At these words Mr Crisparkle fell into a little reverie. in which he thought of several things He thought of the times he had seen the brother and sister together in deep converse over one of his own old college books, now, in the rimy mornings, when he made those sharpening pilgrimages to Cloisterham Weir, now, in the sombre evenings, when he faced the wind at sunset, having climbed his favourite outlook, a beetling fragment of monastery ruin, and the two studious figures passed below him along the margin of the river, in which the town fires and lights already shone, making the landscape bleaker He thought how the consciousness had stolen upon him that in teaching one, he was teaching two, and how he had almost insensibly adapted his explanations to both minds -that with which his own was daily in contact, and that which he only approached through it He thought of the gossip that had reached him from the Nuns' House, to the effect that Helena, whom he had mistrusted as so proud

and fierce, submitted herself to the fairy-bride (as he called her), and learnt from her what she knew. He thought of the picturesque alliance between those two, externally so very different. He thought—perhaps most of all—could it be that these things were yet but so many weeks old, and had become an integral part of his life?

As, whenever the Reverend Septimus fell a-musing, his good mother took it to be an infallible sign that he "wanted support," the blooming old lady made all haste to the dining-room closet, to produce from it the support embodied in a glass of Constantia and a home-made biscuit It was a most wonderful closet, worthy of Cloisterham and of Minor Canon Corner Above it, a portrait of Handel in a flowing wig beamed down at the spectator, with a knowing air of being up to the contents of the closet, and a musical air of intending to combine all its harmonies in one delicious fugue No common closet with a vulgar door on hinges, openable all at once, and leaving nothing to be disclosed by degrees, this rare closet had a lock in mid-air, where two perpendicular slides met, the one falling down, and the other pushing up The upper slide, on being pulled down (leaving the lower a double mystery), revealed deep shelves of pickle-jars, jam-pots, tin canisters, spice-boxes, and agreeably outlandish vessels of blue and white, the luscious lodgings of preserved tamarinds and ginger Every benevolent inhabitant of this retreat had his name inscribed upon his stomach. The pickles, in a uniform of rich brown double-breasted buttoned coat, and yellow or sombre drab continuations, announced their portly forms, in printed capitals, as Walnut, Gherkin, Onion, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Mixed, and other members of that noble The jams, as being of a less masculine temperament, and as wearing curlpapers, announced themselves in feminine caligraphy, like a soft whisper, to be Raspberry, Gooseberry, Apricot, Plum, Damson, Apple, and Peach The scene closing on these charmers, and the lower slide ascending, oranges were revealed, attended by a mighty japanned sugar-box, to temper their acerbity if unripe. Home-made biscuits waited at the Court of these Powers, accompanied by a goodly fragment of plum-cake, and

various slender ladies' fingers, to be dipped into sweet wine and kissed. Lowest of all, a compact leaden vault enshrined the sweet wine and a stock of cordials whence issued whispers of Seville Orange, Lemon, Almond, and Caraway-seed. There was a crowning air upon this closet of closets, of having been for ages hummed through by the Cathedral bell and organ, until those venerable bees had made sublimated honey of everything in store, and it was always observed that every dipper among the shelves (deep, as has been noticed, and swallowing up head, shoulders, and elbows) came forth again mellow-faced, and seeming to have undergone a saccharine transfiguration

The Reverend Septimus yielded himself up quite as willing a victim to a nauseous medicinal herb-closet, also presided over by the china shepherdess, as to this glorious cupboard To what amazing infusions of gentian, peppermint, gilliflower, sage, parsley, thyme, rue, rosemary, and dandelion, did his courageous stomach submit itself! In what wonderful wrappers, enclosing layers of dried leaves, would he swathe his rosy and contented face, if his mother suspected him of a toothache! What botanical blotches would he cheerfully stick upon his cheek, or forehead, if the dear old lady convicted him of an imperceptible pimple there! In this herbaceous penitentiary, situated on an upper staircase-landing a low and narrow whitewashed cell, where bunches of dried leaves hung from rusty hooks in the ceiling, and were spread out upon shelves, in company with portentous bottles would the Reverend Septimus submissively be led, like the highly popular lamb who has so long and unresistingly been led to the slaughter, and there would he, unlike that lamb, bore nobody but himself Not even doing that much, so that the old lady were busy and pleased, he would quietly swallow what was given him, merely taking a corrective dip of hands and face into the great bowl of dried rose-leaves, and into the other great bowl of dried lavender, and then would go out, as confident in the sweetening powers of Cloisterham Weir and a wholesome mind, as Lady Macbeth was hopeless of those of all the seas that roll.

In the present instance the good Minor Canon took his glass of Constantia with an excellent grace, and, so supported to his mother's satisfaction, applied himself to the remaining duties of the day. In their orderly and punctual progress they brought round Vesper Service and twilight. The Cathedral being very cold, he set off for a brisk trot after service, the trot to end in a charge at his favourite fragment of ruin, which was to be carried by storm, without a pause for breath

He carried it in a masterly manner, and, not breathed even then, stood looking down upon the river The river at Cloisterham is sufficiently near the sea to throw up oftentimes a quantity of seaweed An unusual quantity had come in with the last tide, and this, and the confusion of the water, and the restless dipping and flapping of the noisy gulls, and an angry light out seaward beyond the brown-sailed barges that were turning black, foreshadowed a stormy night In his mind he was contrasting the wild and noisy sea with the quiet harbour of Minor Canon Corner, when Helena and Neville Landless passed below He had had the two together in his thoughts all day, and at once climbed down to speak to them together The footing was rough in an uncertain light for any tread save that of a good climber, but the Minor Canon was as good a climber as most men, and stood beside them before many good climbers would have been half-way down

"A wild evening, Miss Landless! Do you not find your usual walk with your brother too exposed and cold for the time of year? Or at all events, when the sun is down, and

the weather is driving in from the sea?"

Helena thought not. It was their favourite walk It

was very retired

"It is very retired," assented Mr Crisparkle, laying hold of his opportunity straightway, and walking on with them "It is a place of all others where one can speak without interruption, as I wish to do Mr Neville, I believe you tell your sister everything that passes between us?"

"Everything, sir"

"Consequently," said Mr Crisparkle, "your sister is aware that I have repeatedly urged you to make some kind

of apology for that unfortunate occurrence which befell, on the night of your arrival here"

In saying it he looked to her, and not to him, therefore it was she, and not he, who replied —

"Yes"

"I call it unfortunate, Miss Helena," resumed Mr Crisparkle, "forasmuch as it certainly has engendered a piejudice against Neville There is a notion about, that he is a dangerously passionate fellow, of an uncontrollable and furious temper he is really avoided as such"

"I have no doubt he is, poor fellow," said Helena, with a look of proud compassion at her brother, expressing a deep sense of his being ungenerously treated "I should be quite sure of it, from your saying so, but what you tell me is confirmed by suppressed hints and references that I

meet with every day "

"Now," Mr Crisparkle again resumed, in a tone of mild though firm persuasion, "is not this to be regretted, and ought it not to be amended? These are early days of Neville's in Cloisterham, and I have no fear of his outliving such a prejudice, and proving himself to have been misunderstood. But how much wiser to take action at once, than to trust to uncertain time! Besides, apart from its being politic, it is right. For there can be no question that Neville was wrong"

"He was provoked," Helena submitted

"He was the assailant," Mr Crisparkle submitted

They walked on in silence, until Helena raised her eyes to the Minor Canon's face, and said, almost reproachfully "Oh, Mr Crisparkle, would you have Neville throw himself at young Drood's feet, or at Mr Jasper's, who maligns him every day? In your heart you cannot mean it From your heart you could not do it, if his case were yours"

"I have represented to Mr Crisparkle, Helena," said Neville, with a glance of deference towards his tutor, "that if I could do it from my heart, I would But I cannot, and I revolt from the pretence You forget, however, that to put the case to Mr Crisparkle as his own, is to suppose

Mr Crisparkle to have done what I did "

"I ask his pardon," said Helena.

"You see," remarked Mr Crisparkle, again laying hold of his opportunity, though with a moderate and delicate touch, "you both instinctively acknowledge that Neville did wrong Then why stop short, and not otherwise acknowledge it?"

"Is there no difference," asked Helena, with a little faltering in her manner, "between submission to a generous

spirit, and submission to a base or trivial one?"

Before the worthy Minor Canon was quite ready with his argument in reference to this nice distinction, Neville struck in —

"Help me to clear myself with Mr Crisparkle, Helena Help me to convince him that I cannot be the first to make concessions without mockery and falsehood. My nature must be changed before I can do so, and it is not changed I am sensible of inexpressible affront, and deliberate aggravation of inexpressible affront, and I am angry. The plain truth is, I am still as angry when I recall that night as I was that night."

"Neville," hinted the Minor Canon, with a steady countenance, "you have repeated that former action of your

hands, which I so much dislike"

"I am sorry for it, sir, but it was involuntary I confessed that I was still as angry"

"And I confess," said Mr Crispaikle, "that I hoped for

better things "

"I am sorry to disappoint you, sir, but it would be far worse to deceive you, and I should deceive you grossly if I pretended that you had softened me in this respect. The time may come when your powerful influence will do even that with the difficult pupil whose antecedents you know, but it has not come yet. Is this so, and in spite of my struggles against myself, Helena?"

She, whose dark eyes were watching the effect of what he said on Mr Crisparkle's face, replied—to Mr Crisparkle, not to him "It is so" After a short pause, she answered the slightest look of inquiry conceivable, in her brother's eyes, with as slight an affirmative bend of her

own head, and he went on -

"I have never yet had the courage to say to you, sir,

what in full openness I ought to have said when you first talked with me on this subject. It is not easy to say, and I have been withheld by a fear of its seeming indiculous, which is very strong upon me down to this last moment, and might, but for my sister, prevent my being quite open with you even now—I admire Miss Bud, sir, so very much, that I cannot bear her being treated with conceit or indifference, and even if I did not feel that I had an injury against young Drood on my own account, I should feel that I had an injury against him on hers."

Mr Crisparkle, in utter amazement, looked at Helena for corroboration, and met in her expressive face full cor-

roboration, and a plea for advice

"The young lady of whom you speak is, as you know, Mr Neville, shortly to be married," said Mr Crisparkle, gravely, "therefore your admiration, if it be of that special nature which you seem to indicate, is outrageously misplaced Moreover, it is monstrous that you should take upon yourself to be the young lady's champion against her chosen husband Besides, you have seen them only once The young lady has become your sister's friend, and I wonder that your sister, even on her behalf, has not checked you in this irrational and culpable fancy"

"She has tried, sir, but uselessly Husband or no husband, that fellow is incapable of the feeling with which I am inspired towards the beautiful young creature whom he treats like a doll I say he is as incapable of it, as he is unworthy of her I say she is sacrificed in being bestowed upon him I say that I love her, and despise and hate him!" This with a face so flushed, and a gesture so violent, that his sister crossed to his side, and caught his

arm, remonstrating, "Neville, Neville!"

Thus recalled to himself, he quickly became sensible of having lost the guard he had set upon his passionate tendency, and covered his face with his hand, as one repentant and wretched

Mr Crisparkle, watching him attentively, and at the same time meditating how to proceed, walked on for some paces in silence Then he spoke —

"Mr Neville, Mr Neville, I am sorely grieved to see

in you more traces of a character as sullen, angry, and wild, as the night now closing in They are of too serious an aspect to leave me the resource of treating the infatuation you have disclosed, as undeserving serious considera-I give it very serious consideration, and I speak to you accordingly This feud between you and young Drood must not go on I cannot permit it to go on any longer, knowing what I now know from you, and you living under my roof Whatever prejudiced and unauthorized constructions your blind and envious wiath may put upon his character, it is a frank, good-natured character I know I can trust to it for that Now, pray observe what I am about to say On reflection, and on your sister's representation, I am willing to admit that, in making peace with young Drood, you have a right to be met half-way gage that you shall be, and even that young Drood shall make the first advance This condition fulfilled, you will pledge me the honour of a Christian gentleman that the quarrel is for ever at an end on your side. What may be in your heart when you give him your hand, can only be known to the Searcher of all hearts, but it will never go well with you, if there be any treachery there So far, as to that, next as to what I must again speak of as your infatuation I understand it to have been confided to me, and to be known to no other person save your sister and vourself Do I understand aright?"

Helena answered in a low voice "It is only known to

us three who are here together"

"It is not at all known to the young lady, your friend?"

"On my soul, no!"

"I require you, then, to give me your similar and solemn pledge, Mr Neville, that it shall remain the secret it is, and that you will take no other action whatsoever upon it than endeavouring (and that most earnestly) to erase it from your mind I will not tell you that it will soon pass, I will not tell you that it is the fancy of the moment, I will not tell you that such caprices have their rise and fall among the young and ardent every hour, I will leave you undisturbed in the belief that it has few parallels or none, that it will abide with you a long time, and that it will be

very difficult to conquer So much the more weight shall I attach to the pledge I require from you, when it is unreservedly given "

The young man twice or thrice essayed to speak, but

failed

"Let me leave you with your sister, whom it is time you took home," said Mr Crisparkle "You will find me alone in my room by-and-by"

"Pray do not leave us yet," Helena imploied him "An-

other minute"

"I should not," said Neville, pressing his hand upon his face, "have needed so much as another minute, if you had been less patient with me, Mr Crisparkle, less considerate of me, and less unpretendingly good and true Oh, if in my childhood I had known such a guide!"

"Follow your guide now, Neville," murmured Helena,

"and follow him to Heaven!"

There was that in her tone which broke the good Minor Canon's voice, or it would have repudiated her exaltation of him. As it was, he laid a finger on his lips, and looked towards her brother

"To say that I give both pledges, Mr Crisparkle, out of my innermost heart, and to say that there is no treachery in it, is to say nothing!" Thus Neville, greatly moved "I beg your forgiveness for my miserable lapse into a burst

of passion"

"Not mine, Neville, not mine You know with whom forgiveness lies, as the highest attribute conceivable Miss Helena, you and your brother are twin children You came into this world with the same dispositions, and you passed your younger days together surrounded by the same adverse circumstances What you have overcome in yourself, can you not overcome in him? You see the rock that lies in his course Who but you can keep him clear of it?"

"Who but you, sir?" replied Helena "What is my influence, or my weak wisdom, compared with yours!"

"You have the wisdom of Love," returned the Minor Canon, "and it was the highest wisdom ever known upon this earth, remember—As to mine—but the less said of that commonplace commodity the better—Good-night!"

She took the hand he offered her, and gratefully and almost reverently raised it to her lips

"Tut!" said the Minor Canon, softly, "I am much over-

paid!" and turned away

Retracing his steps towards the Cathedral Close, he tried, as he went along in the dark, to think out the best means of bringing to pass what he had promised to effect, and what must somehow be done "I shall probably be asked to marry them," he reflected, "and I would they were married and gone! But this presses first "He debated principally whether he should write to young Drood, or whether he should speak to Jasper The consciousness of being popular with the whole Cathedral establishment inclined him to the latter course, and the well-timed sight of the lighted gatehouse decided him to take it "I will strike while the iron is hot," he said, "and see him now"

Jasper was lying asleep on a couch before the fire, when, having ascended the postern-stair, and received no answer to his knock at the door, Mr Crisparkle gently turned the handle and looked in Long afterwards he had cause to remember how Jasper sprang from the couch in a delirious state between sleeping and waking, and crying out "What

is the matter? Who did it?"

"It is only I, Jasper I am sorry to have disturbed you"

The glare of his eyes settled down into a look of recognition, and he moved a chair or two, to make a way to the fireside

"I was dreaming at a great rate, and am glad to be disturbed from an indigestive after-dinner sleep. Not to men-

tion that you are always welcome"

"Thank you I am not confident," returned Mr Crisparkle, as he sat himself down in the easy-chair placed for him, "that my subject will at first sight be quite as welcome as myself, but I am a minister of peace, and I pursue my subject in the interests of peace. In a word, Jasper, I want to establish peace between these two young fellows."

A very perplexed expression took hold of Mr Jasper's face, a very perplexing expression too, for Mr Crisparkle

could make nothing of it

"How?" was Jasper's inquiry, in a low and slow voice, after a silence

"For the 'How'I come to you I want to ask you to do me the great favour and service of interposing with your nephew (I have already interposed with Mr Neville), and getting him to write you a short note, in his lively way, saying that he is willing to shake hands. I know what a good-natured fellow he is, and what influence you have with him. And without in the least defending Mr Neville, we must all admit that he was bitterly stung"

Jasper turned that perplexed face towards the fire Mr Crisparkle continuing to observe it, found it even more perplexing than before, inasmuch as it seemed to denote (which could hardly be) some close internal calculation

"I know that you are not prepossessed in Mr Neville's favour," the Minor Canon was going on, when Jaspei

stopped him

"You have cause to say so I am not, indeed"

"Undoubtedly, and I admit his lamentable violence of temper, though I hope he and I will get the better of it between us But I have exacted a very solemn promise from him as to his future demeanour towards your nephew, if you do kindly interpose, and I am sure he will keep it"

"You are always responsible and trustworthy Mr Crisparkle Do you really feel sure that you can answer for him so confidently?"

" I do "

The perplexed and perplexing look vanished

"Then you relieve my mind of a great dread, and a

heavy weight," said Jasper, "I will do it"

Mr Crisparkle, delighted by the swiftness and completeness of his success, acknowledged it in the handsomest terms

"I will do it," repeated Jasper, "for the comfort of having your guarantee against my vague and unfounded fears You will laugh—but do you keep a Diary?"

"A line for a day, not more"

"A line for a day would be quite as much as my uneventful life would need, Heaven knows," said Jasper, taking a book from a desk, "but that my Diary is, in fact, a Diary of Ned's life too You will laugh at this entry, you will guess when it was made —

"" Past midnight After what I have just now seen, I have a morbid dread upon me of some horrible consequences resulting to my dear boy, that I cannot reason with or in any way contend against All my efforts are vain. The demoniacal passion of this Neville Landless, his strength in his fury, and his savage rage for the destruction of its object, appal me. So profound is the impression, that twice since I have gone into my dear boy's room, to assure myself of his sleeping safely, and not lying dead in his blood?

"Here is another entry next morning -

"Ned up and away Light-hearted and unsuspicious as ever He laughed when I cautioned him, and said he was as good a man as Neville Landless any day I told him that might be, but he was not as bad a man He continued to make light of it, but I travelled with him as far as I could, and left him most unwillingly I am unable to shake off these dark intangible presentiments of evil—if feelings founded upon staring facts are to be so called '

"Again and again," said Jasper, in conclusion, twirling the leaves of the book before putting it by, "I have relapsed into these moods, as other entries show But I have now your assurance at my back, and shall put it in my book, and make it an antidote to my black humours"

"Such an antidote, I hope," returned Mr Crisparkle, "as will induce you before long to consign the black humours to the flames I ought to be the last to find any fault with you this evening, when you have met my wishes so freely, but I must say, Jasper, that your devotion to your nephew has made you exaggerative here"

"You are my witness," said Jasper, shrugging his shoulders, "what my state of mind honestly was, that night, before I sat down to write, and in what words I expressed it You remember objecting to a word I used as being

too strong? It was a stronger word than any in my

Diary "

"Well, well Try the antidote," rejoined Mi Crisparkle, "and may it give you a brighter and better view of the case! We will discuss it no more now thank you for myself, and I thank you sincerely "

"You shall find," said Jasper, as they shook hands, "that I will not do the thing you wish me to do, by halves I will take care that Ned, giving way at all, shall give way

thoroughly "

On the third day after this conversation, he called on Mr Crisparkle with the following letter -

"MY DEAR JACK I am touched by your account of your interview with Mr Crisparkle, whom I much respect and esteem At once I openly say that I forgot myself on that occasion quite as much as Mr Landless did, and that I wish that bygone to be a bygone, and all to be right again

"Look here, dear old boy Ask Mr Landless to dinner on Christmas Eve (the better the day the better the deed), and let there be only we three, and let us shake hands all

round there and then, and say no more about it

"My dear Jack,

"Ever your most affectionate "EDWIN DROOD

"PS Love to Miss Pussy at the next music-lesson"

"You expect Mr Neville, then?" said Mr Crisparkle.

"I count upon his coming," said Mr Tasper

CHAPTER XI

A PICTURE AND A RING

Behind the most ancient part of Holborn, London, where certain gabled houses some centuries of age still stand looking on the public way, as if disconsolately looking for the Old Bourne that has long run dry, is a little nook composed of two irregular quadrangles, called Staple Inn It is one of those nooks, the turning into which out of the clashing street, imparts to the relieved pedestrian the sensation of having put cotton in his ears, and velvet soles on his boots. It is one of those nooks where a few smoky sparrows twitter in smoky trees, as though they called to one another, "Let us play at country," and where a few feet of garden-mould and a few yards of gravel enable them to do that refreshing violence to their tiny understandings Moreover, it is one of those nooks which are legal nooks, and it contains a little Hall, with a little lantern in its roof to what obstructive purposes devoted, and at whose expense, this history knoweth not

In the days when Cloisterham took offence at the existence of a railroad afar off, as menacing that sensitive constitution, the property of us Britons the odd fortune of which sacred institution it is to be in exactly equal degrees croaked about, trembled for, and boasted of, whatever happens to anything, anywhere in the world in those days no neighbouring architecture of lofty proportions had arisen to overshadow Staple Inn The westering sun bestowed bright glances on it, and the south-west wind blew into it

unimpeded

Neither wind nor sun, however, favoured Staple Inn one December afternoon towards six o'clock, when it was filled with fog, and candles shed murky and blurred rays through the windows of all its then-occupied sets of chambers, notably from a set of chambers in a corner house in the little inner quadrangle, presenting in black and white over its ugly portal the mysterious inscription —

In which set of chambers, never having troubled his head about the inscription, unless to bethink himself at odd times on glancing up at it, that haply it might mean Perhaps John Thomas, or Perhaps Joe Tyler, sat Mr Grewgious writing by his fire

Who could have told, by looking at Mr. Grewgious,

whether he had ever known ambition or disappointment? He had been bred to the Bar, and had laid himself out for chamber practice, to draw deeds, "convey the wise it call," as Pistol says But Conveyancing and he had made such a very indifferent marriage of it that they had separated by consent—if there can be said to be separation where there has never been coming together

No Coy Conveyancing would not come to Mr Grewgious She was wooed, not won, and they went their several ways But an Arbitration being blown towards him by some unaccountable wind, and he gaining great credit in it as one indefatigable in seeking out right and doing right, a pretty fat Receivership was next blown into his pocket by a wind more traceable to its source. So, by chance, he had found his niche. Receiver and Agent now, to two rich estates, and deputing their legal business, in an amount worth having, to a firm of solicitors on the floor below, he had snuffed out his ambition (supposing him to have ever lighted it), and had settled down with his snuffers for the rest of his life under the dry vine and fig-tree of P J T, who planted in seventeen-forty-seven

Many accounts and account-books, many files of correspondence, and several strong boxes, garnished Mr Grew gious's room. They can scarcely be represented as having lumbered it, so conscientious and precise was their orderly arrangement. The apprehension of dying suddenly, and leaving one fact or one figure with any incompleteness or obscurity attaching to it, would have stretched Mr Grewgious stone-dead any day. The largest fidelity to a trust was the life-blood of the man. There are sorts of life-blood that course more quickly, more gaily, more attractively, but there is no better sort in circulation.

There was no luxury in his room. Even its comforts were limited to its being dry and warm, and having a snug though faded fireside. What may be called its private life was confined to the hearth, and an easy-chair, and an old-fashioned occasional round table that was brought out upon the rug after business hours, from a corner where it elsewise remained turned up like a shining mahogany shield. Be-

hind it, when standing thus on the defensive, was a closet, usually containing something good to drink An outer room was the clerk's room, Mr Grewgious's sleeping-room was across the common stair, and he held some not empty cellarage at the bottom of the common stair Three hundred days in the year, at least, he crossed over to the hotel in Furnival's Inn for his dinner, and after dinner crossed back again, to make the most of these simplicities until it should become broad business day once more, with P J T, date seventeen-forty-seven

As Mr Grewgious sat and wrote by his fire that afternoon, so did the clerk of Mr Grewgious sit and write by his tire A pale, puffy-faced, dark-haired person of thirty, with big dark eyes that wholly wanted lustre, and a dissatisfied doughy complexion, that seemed to ask to be sent to the baker's, this attendant was a mysterious being, possessed of some strange power over Mr Grewgious As though he had been called into existence, like a fabulous Familiar, by a magic spell which had failed when required to dismiss him, he stuck tight to Mr Grewgious's stool, although Mr Grewgious's comfort and convenience would manifestly have been advanced by dispossessing him gloomy person with tangled locks, and a general air of having been reared under the shadow of that baleful tree of Java which has given shelter to more lies than the whole botanical kingdom, Mr Grewgious, nevertheless, treated him with unaccountable consideration

"Now, Bazzard," said Mr Grewgious, on the entrance of his clerk looking up from his papers as he arranged them for the night "what is in the wind besides fog?"

"Mr Drood," says Bazzard
"What of him?"

"Has called," said Bazzard

"You might have shown him in"

"I am doing it," said Bazzard The visitor came in accordingly

"Dear me!" said Mr Grewgious, looking round his pair of office candles "I thought you had called and merely left your name and gone How do you do, Mr. Edwin? Dear me, you're choking!"

"It's this fog," returned Edwin, "and it makes my eyes

smart, like Cayenne pepper"

"Is it really so bad as that? Pray undo your wrappers It's fortunate I have so good a fire, but Mr Bazzard has taken care of me"

"No, I haven't," said Mr Bazzard at the door

"Ah! then it follows that I must have taken care of myself without observing it," said Mr Grewgious "Pray be seated in my chair No I beg! Coming out of such an atmosphere, in my chair"

Edwin took the easy-chair in the corner, and the fog he had brought in with him, and the fog he took off with his greatcoat and neck-shawl, was speedily licked up by the

eager fire

"I look," said Edwin, smiling, "as if I had come to

stop"

"—By-the-bye," cried Mr Grewgious, "excuse my interrupting you, do stop The fog may clear in an hour or two We can have dinner in from just across Holborn You had better take your Cayenne pepper here than outside, pray stop and dine"

"You are very kind," said Edwin, glancing about him as though attracted by the notion of a new and relishing

sort of gipsy-party

"Not at all," said Mr Grewgious, "you are very kind to join issue with a bachelor in chambers, and take potluck And I'll ask," said Mr Grewgious, dropping his voice, and speaking with a twinkling eye, as if inspired with a bright thought "I'll ask Bazzard He mightn't like it else—Bazzard!"

Bazzard reappeared

"Dine presently with Mr Drood and me"

"If I am ordered to dine, of course I will, sir," was the gloomy answer

groomy answer

"Save the man!" cried Mr Grewgious "You're not ordered, you're invited"

"Thank you, sir," said Bazzard, "in that case I don't

care if I do"

"That's arranged And perhaps you wouldn't mind," said Mr Grewgious, "stepping over to the hotel in Furni-

val's, and asking them to send in materials for laying the cloth For dinner we'll have a tureen of the hottest and strongest soup available, and we'll have the best made-dish that can be recommended, and we'll have a joint (such as a haunch of mutton), and we'll have a goose, or a turkey, or any little stuffed thing of that sort that may happen to be in the bill of fare-in short, we'll have whatever there is on hand "

These liberal directions Mr Grewgious issued with his usual air of reading an inventory, or repeating a lesson, or doing anything else by rote Bazzard, after drawing out the round table, withdrew to execute them

"I was a little delicate, you see," said Mr Grewgious, in a lower tone, after his clerk's departure, "about employing him in the foraging or commissariat department he mightn't like it "

"He seems to have his own way, sir," remarked Edwin

"His own way?" returned Mr Grewgious "Oh, dear, Poor fellow, you quite mistake him If he had his own way, he wouldn't be here"

"I wonder where he would be!" Edwin thought he only thought it, because Mr Grewgious came and stood himself with his back to the other corner of the fire, and his shoulder-blades against the chimney-piece, and collected his skirts for easy conversation

"I take it, without having the gift of prophecy, that you have done me the favour of looking in to mention that you are going down yonder-where, I can tell you, you are expected—and to offer to execute any little commission from me to my charming ward, and perhaps to sharpen me up a bit in any proceeding? Eh, Mr Edwin?"

"I called, sir, before going down, as an act of attention"

"Of attention!" said Mr Grewgious "Ah! of course, not of impatience?"

"Impatience, sir?"

Mr Grewgious had meant to be arch—not that he in the remotest degree expressed that meaning—and had brought himself into scarcely supportable proximity with the fire, as if to burn the fullest effect of his archness into himself, as other subtle impressions are burnt into hard metals.

But his archness suddenly flying before the composed face and manner of his visitor, and only the fire remaining, he started and rubbed himself

"I have lately been down yonder," said Mr Grewgious, rearranging his skirts, "and that was what I referred to, when I said I could tell you you are expected"

"Indeed, sir! Yes, I knew that Pussy was looking out

for me"

"Do you keep a cat down there?" asked Mr Grewgious. Edwin coloured a little as he explained "I call Rosa Pussy"

"Oh, really," said Mr Grewgious, smoothing down his

head, "that's very affable"

Edwin glanced at his face, uncertain whether or no he seriously objected to the appellation But Edwin might as well have glanced at the face of a clock

"A pet name, sır," he explained again

"Umps," said Mr Grewgious, with a nod But with such an extraordinary compromise between an unqualified assent and a qualified dissent, that his visitor was much disconcerted

"Did PRosa-" Edwin began by way of recovering

himself

"PRosa?" repeated Mr Grewgious

"I was going to say Pussy, and changed my mind,—did she tell you anything about the Landlesses?"

"No," said Mr Grewgious "What is the Landlesses?

An estate? A villa? A farm?"

"A brother and sister The sister is at the Nuns' House, and has become a great friend of P——"

"PRosa's," Mr Grewgious struck in, with a fixed face

"She is a strikingly handsome girl, sir, and I thought she might have been described to you, or presented to you perhaps?"

"Neither," said Mr Grewgious "But here is Bazzard" Bazzard returned, accompanied by two waiters—an immovable waiter and a flying waiter, and the three brought in with them as much fog as gave a new roar to the fire. The flying waiter, who had brought everything on his shoulders, laid the cloth with amazing rapidity and dexterity;

while the immovable waiter, who had brought nothing. found fault with him The flying waiter then highly polished all the glasses he had brought, and the mimovable waiter looked through them The flying waiter then flew across Holborn for the soup, and flew back again, and then took another flight for the made-dish, and flew back again. and then took another flight for the joint and poultry, and flew back again, and between whiles took supplementary flights for a great variety of articles, as it was discovered from time to time that the immovable waiter had forgotten But let the flying waiter cleave the air as he might, he was always reproached on his return by the immovable waiter for bringing fog with him, and being out At the conclusion of the repast, by which time the flying waiter was severely blown, the immovable waiter gathered up the tablecloth under his arm with a grand air, and having sternly (not to say with indignation) looked on at the flying waiter wnile he set the clean glasses round, directed a valedictory glance towards Mr Grewgious, conveying "Let it be clearly understood between us that the reward is mine, and that Nil is the claim of this slave," and pushed the flying waiter before him out of the room

It was like a highly-finished miniature-painting representing My Lords of the Circumlocution Department, Commandership-in-Chief of any sort, Government It was quite an edifying little picture to be hung on the line in the National

Gallery

As the fog had been the proximate cause of this sumptuous repast, so the fog served for its general sauce. To hear the out-door clerks sneezing, wheezing, and beating their feet on the gravel was a zest far surpassing Doctor Kitchener's. To bid, with a shiver, the unfortunate flying waiter shut the door before he had opened it, was a condiment of a profounder flavour than Harvey. And here let it be noticed, parenthetically, that the leg of this young man, in its application to the door, evinced the finest sense of touch always preceding himself and tray (with something of an angling air about it), by some seconds and always lingering after he and the tray had disappeared,

like Macbeth's leg when accompanying him off the stage with reluctance to the assassination of Duncan

The host had gone below to the cellar, and had brought up bottles of ruby, straw-coloured, and golden drinks, which had ripened long ago in lands where no fogs are, and had since lain slumbering in the shade. Sparkling and tingling after so long a nap, they pushed at their corks to help the corkscrew (like prisoners helping rioters to force their gates), and danced out gaily. If P J T in seventeen-forty-seven, or in any other year of his period, drank such wines—then, for a certainty, P J T was Pretty Jolly Too

Externally, Mr Grewgious showed no signs of being mellowed by these glowing vintages. Instead of his drinking them, they might have been poured over him in his high-dried snuff form, and run to waste, for any lights and shades they caused to flicker over his face. Neither was his manner influenced. But, in his wooden way, he had observant eyes for Edwin, and when at the end of dinner, he motioned Edwin back to his own easy-chair in the fireside corner, and Edwin sank luxuriously into it after very brief remonstrance, Mr Grewgious, as he turned his seat round towards the fire too, and smoothed his head and face, might have been seen looking at his visitor between his smoothing fingers

"Bazzard!" said Mr Grewgious, suddenly turning to him "I follow you, sir," returned Bazzard, who had done his work of consuming meat and arink in a workmanlike manner, though mostly in speechlessness

"I drink to you, Bazzard, Mr Edwin, success to Mr

Bazzard!"

"Success to Mr Bazzard!" echoed Edwin, with a totally unfounded appearance of enthusiasm, and with the

unspoken addition "What in, I wonder!"

"And May!" pursued Mr. Grewgious—"I am not at liberty to be definite—May!—my conversational powers are so very limited that I know I shall not come well out of this—May!—it ought to be put imaginatively, but I have no imagination—May!—the thorn of anxiety is as nearly the mark as I am likely to get—May it come out at last!"

Mr Bazzard, with a frowning smile at the fire, put a hand into his tangled locks, as if the thorn of anxiety were there, then into his waistcoat, as if it were there, then into his pockets, as if it were there. In all these movements he was closely followed by the eyes of Edwin, as if that young gentleman expected to see the thorn in action. It was not produced, however, and Mr Bazzard merely said. "I follow you, sir, and I thank you."

"I am going," said Mr Grewgious, jingling his glass on the table with one hand, and bending aside under cover of the other, to whisper to Edwin, "to drink to my ward But I put Bazzard first He mightn't like it else"

This was said with a mysterious wink, or what would have been a wink if, in Mr Grewgious's hands, it could have been quick enough. So Edwin winked responsively, without the least idea what he meant by doing so

"And now," said Mr Grewgious, "I devote a bumper to the fair and fascinating Miss Rosa Bazzard, the fair

and fascinating Miss Rosa!"

"I follow you, sir," said Bazzard, "and I pledge you!"

"And so do I!" said Edwin

"Lord bless me," cried Mr Grewgious, breaking the blank silence which of course ensued though why these pauses should come upon us when we have performed any small social rite, not directly inducive of self-examination or mental despondency, who can tell? "I am a particularly Angular man, and yet I fancy (if I may use the word, not having a morsel of fancy) that I could draw a picture of a true lover's state of mind, to-night"

"Let us follow you, sir," said Bazzard, "and have the

picture "

"Mr Edwin will correct it where it's wrong," resume it Mr Grewgious, "and will throw in a few touches from the life. I dare say it is wrong in many particulars, and wants many touches from the life, for I was born a Chip and have neither soft sympathies nor soft experience. Well! I hazard the guess that the true lover's mind is completely permeated by the beloved object of his affections. I hazard the guess that her dear name is precious to him, cannot be heard or repeated without emotion and

is preserved sacred. If he has any distinguishing appellation of fondness for her, it is reserved for her, and is not for common ears A name that it would be a privilege to call her by, being alone with her own bright self, it would be a liberty, a coldness, an insensibility, almost a breach of good faith, to flaunt elsewhere "

It was wonderful to see Mr Grewgious sitting bolt upright, with his hands on his knees, continuously chopping this discourse out of himself much as a chairty boy with a very good memory might get his catechism said and evincing no correspondent emotion whatever, unless in a certain occasional little tingling perceptible at the end of his nose

"My picture," Mr Grewgious proceeded, "goes on to represent (under correction from you, Mr Edwin) the true lover as ever impatient to be in the piesence or vicinity of the beloved object of his affections, as caring very little for his ease in any other society, and as constantly seeking that If I was to say seeking that, as a bird seeks its nest, I should make an ass of myself, because that would trench upon what I understand to be poetry, and I am so far from trenching upon poetry at any time, that I never, to my knowledge, got within ten thousand miles of it And I am besides totally unacquainted with the habits of birds, except the birds of Staple Inn, who seek their nests on ledges, and in gutterpipes and chimney-pots, not constructed for them by the beneficent hand of Nature I beg, therefore, to be understood as foregoing the bird's-nest. But my picture does represent the true lover as having no existence separable from that of the beloved object of his affections, and as living at once a doubled life and a halved life And if I do not clearly express what I mean by that, it is either for the reason that having no conversational powers, I cannot express what I mean, or that having no meaning, I do not mean what I fail to express. Which, to the best of my belief, is not the case"

Edwin had turned red and turned white, as certain points of this picture came into the light. He now sat

looking at the fire, and bit his lip

"The speculations of an Angular man," resumed Mr Grewgious, still sitting and speaking exactly as before, "are probably erroneous on so globular a topic figure to myself (subject, as before, to Mr Edwin's correction) that there can be no coolness, no lassitude, no doubt, no indifference, no half fire and half smoke state of mind, in a real lover Pray am I at all near the mark in my picture?"

As abrupt in his conclusion as in his commencement and progress, he jerked this inquiry at Edwin, and stopped when one might have supposed him in the middle of his oration

"I should say, sır," stammered Edwin, "as you refer the question to me-"

"Yes," said Mr Grewgious, "I refer it to you, as an authority"

"I should say, then, sir," Edwin went on embarrassed, "that the picture you have drawn is generally correct, but I submit that perhaps you may be rather hard upon the unlucky lover "

"Likely so," assented Mr Grewgious, "likely so a hard man in the grain"

"He may not show," said Edwin, "all he feels, or he

may not-

There he stopped so long, to find the rest of his sentence, that Mr Grewgious rendered his difficulty a thousand times the greater by unexpectedly striking in with -

"No, to be sure, he may not!"

After that, they all sat silent, the silence of Mr Bazzard being occasioned by slumber

"His responsibility is very great, though," said Mr

Grewgious at length, with his eyes on the fire

Edwin nodded assent, with his eyes on the fire

"And let him be sure that he trifles with no one," said Mr Grewgious, "neither with himself, nor with any other "

Edwin bit his lip again, and still sat boking at the fire

"He must not make a plaything of a treasure. Woe betide him if he does! Let him take that well to heart," said Mr Grewgious

Though he said these things in short sentences, much as the suppositious charity boy just now referred to might have repeated a verse or two from the Book of Proverbs, there was something dreamy (for so literal a man) in the way in which he now shook his right forefinger at the live coals in the grate, and again fell silent

But not for long As he sat upright and stiff in his chair, he suddenly rapped his knees, like the carved image of some queer Joss or other coming out of its reverie, and said "We must finish this bottle, Mr Edwin Let me help you I'll help Bazzard too, though he is asleep He mightn't like it else"

He helped them both, and helped himself, and drained his glass, and stood it bottom upward on the table, as

though he had just caught a bluebottle in it

"And now, Mr Edwin," he proceeded, wiping his mouth and hands upon his handkerchief "to a little piece of business. You received from me the other day, a certified copy of Miss Rosa's father's will. You knew its contents before, but you received it from me as a matter of business. I should have sent it to Mr Jasper, but for Miss Rosa's wishing it to come straight to you, in preference You received it?"

'Quite safely, sir"

"You should have acknowledged its receipt," said Mr Grewgious, "business being business all the world over However, you did not"

"I meant to have acknowledged it when I first came in

this evening, sir "

"Not a business-like acknowledgment," returned Mr Grewgious, "however, let that pass Now, in that document you have observed a few words of kindly allusion to its being left to me to discharge a little trust confided to me in conversation, at such time as I in my discretion may think best"

"Yes, sir"

"Mr Edwin, it came into my mind just now, when I was looking at the fire, that I could, in my discretion, acquit myself of that trust at no bette time than the present. Favour me with your attention, half a minute"

He took a bunch of keys from his pocket, singled out by the candle-light the key he wanted, and then, with a candle in his hand, went to a bureau or escritoire, unlocked it, touched the spring of a little secret drawer, and took from it an ordinary ring-case made for a single ring. With this in his hand, he returned to his chair. As he held it up for the young man to see, his hand trembled

"Mr Edwin, this rose of diamonds and rubies, delicately set in gold, was a ring belonging to Miss Rosa's mother. It was removed from her dead hand, in my presence, with such distracted grief as I hope it may never be my lot to contemplate again. Hard man as I am, I am not hard enough for that. See how bright these stones shine!" opening the case. "And yet the eyes that were so much brighter, and that so often looked upon them with a light and a proud heart, have been ashes among ashes, and dust among dust, some years! If I had any imagination (which it is needless to say I have not), I might imagine that the lasting beauty of these stones was almost cruel."

He closed the case again as he spoke

"This ring was given to the young lady who was drowned so early in her beautiful and happy career, by her husband, when they first plighted their faith to one another. It was he who removed it from her unconscious hand, and it was he who, when his death drew very near, placed it in mine. The trust in which I received it was that, you and Miss Rosa growing to manhood and womanhood, and your betrothal prospering and coming to maturity, I should give it to you to place upon her finger. Failing those desired results, it was to remain in my possession."

Some trouble was in the young man's face, and some indecision was in the action of his hand, as Mr Grewgious,

looking steadfastly at him, gave him the ring

"Your placing it on her finger," said Mr Grewgious, "will be the solemn seal upon your strict fidelity to the living and the dead. You are going to her, to make the last irrevocable preparations for your marriage. Take it with you."

The young man took the little case, and placed it in his

breast.

"If anything should be amiss, if anything should be even slightly wrong, between you, if you should have any secret consciousness that you are committing yourself to this step for no higher reason than because you have long been accustomed to look forward to it, then," said Mr Grewgious, "I charge you once more, by the living and by the dead, to bring that ring back to me!"

Here Bazzard awoke himself by his own snoring, and, as is usual in such cases, sat apoplectically staring at vacancy, as defying vacancy to accuse him of having been

asleep

"Bazzard!" said Mr Grewgious, harder than ever

"I follow you, sir," said Bazzard, "and I have been following you"

"In discharge of a trust, I have handed Mr Edwin Drood

a ring of diamonds and jubies You see?"

Edwin reproduced the little case, and opened it, and Bazzard looked into it

"I follow you both, sir," returned Bazzard, "and I wit-

ness the transaction "

Evidently anxious to get away and be alone, Edwin Drood now resumed his outer clothing, muttering something about time and appointments. The fog was reported no clearer (by the flying waiter, who alighted from a speculative flight in the coffee interest), but he went out into it, and Bazzard, after his manner, "followed" him

Mr Grewgious, left alone, walked softly and slowly to and fro, for an hour and more He was restless, to-night,

and seemed dispirited

"I hope I have done right," he said "The appeal to him seemed necessary It was hard to lose the ring, and yet it must have gone from me very soon"

He closed the empty little drawer with a sigh, and shut and locked the escritoire, and came back to the solitary

fireside

"Her ring," he went on "Will it come back to me? My mind hangs about her ring very uneasily to-night But that is explainable I have had it so long, and I have prized it so much! I wonder—"

He was in a wondering mood as well as a restless;

for, though he checked himself at that point, and took another walk, he resumed his wondering when he sat down

again

"I wonder (for the ten-thousandth time, and what a weak fool I, for what can it signify now!) whether he confided the charge of their orphan child to me, because he knew—Good God, how like her mother she has become!

"I wonder whether he ever so much as suspected that some one doted on her, at a hopeless, speechless distance, when he struck in and won her I wonder whether it ever crept into his mind who that unfortunate some one was!

"I wonder whether I shall sleep to-night! At all events, I will shut out the world with the bedclothes, and try"

Mr Grewgious crossed the staircase to his raw and foggy bedroom, and was soon ready for bed Dimly catching sight of his face in the misty looking-glass, he held his candle to it for a moment

"A likely some one, you, to come into anybody's thoughts in such an aspect!" he exclaimed "There! there!

Get to bed, poor man, and cease to jabber 1"

With that, he extinguished his light, pulled up the bedclothes around him, and with another sigh shut out the world And yet there are such unexplored romantic nooks in the unlikeliest men, that even old tinderous and touchwoody P J T Possibly Jabbered Thus, at some odd times, in or about seventeen-forty-seven

CHAPTER XII

A NIGHT WITH DURDLES.

When Mr Sapsea has nothing better to do, towards evening, and finds the contemplation of his own profundity becoming a little monotonous in spite of the vastness of the subject, he often takes an airing in the Cathedral Close and thereabout. He likes to pass the churchyard with a swelling air of proprietorship, and to encourage in his breast a sort of benignant-landlord feeling, in that he has

been bountiful towards that meritorious tenant, Mrs Sapsea, and has publicly given her a prize. He likes to see a stray face or two looking in through the railings, and perhaps reading his inscription. Should he meet a stranger coming from the churchyard with a quick step he is morally convinced that the stranger is "with a blush retiring," as monumentally directed.

Mr Sapsea's importance has received enhancement, for he has become Mayor of Cloisterham Without mayors, and many of them, it cannot be disputed that the whole framework of society—Mr Sapsea is confident that he invented that forcible figure—would fall to pieces Mayors have been knighted for "going up" with addresses explosive machines intrepidly discharging shot and shell into the English Grammar Mr Sapsea may "go up" with an address Rise, Sir Thomas Sapsea! Of such is the salt of the earth

Mr 'Sapsea has improved the acquaintance of Mr Tasper, since their first meeting to partake of port, epitaph, backgammon, beef, and salad Mr Sapsea has been received at the gatehouse with kindred hospitality, and on that occasion Mr Jasper seated himself at the piano, and sang to him, tickling his ears-figuratively-long enough to present a considerable area for tickling What Mr Sapsea likes in that young man is, that he is always ready to profit by the wisdom of his elders, and that he is sound, sir, at the core In proof of which, he sang to Mr Sapsea that evening, no kickshaw ditties, favourites with national enemies, but gave him the genuine George the Third homebrewed, exhorting him (as "my brave boys") to reduce to a smashed condition all other islands but this island, and all continents, peninsulas, isthmuses, promontories, and other geographical forms of land soever, besides sweeping the seas in all directions In short, he rendered it pretty clear that Providence made a distinct mistake in originating so small a nation of hearts of oak, and so many other verminous peoples

Mr Sapsea, walking slowly this moist evening near the churchyard with his hands behind him, on the look-out for a blushing and retiring stranger, turns a corner, and comes instead into the goodly presence of the Dean, conversing with the Verger and Mr Jasper Mr Sapsea makes his obeisance, and is instantly stricken far more ecclesiastical

than any Archbishop of York or Canterbury

"You are evidently going to write a book about us, Mr Jasper," quoth the Dean, "to write a book about us Well! We are very ancient, and we ought to make a good book. We are not so richly endowed in possessions as in age, but perhaps you will put that in your book, among other things, and call attention to our wrongs."

Mr Tope, as in duty bound, is greatly entertained by

this

"I really have no intention at all, sir," replies Jasper, of turning author or archæologist. It is but a whim of mine. And even for my whim, Mr. Sapsea here is more accountable than I am."

"How so, Mr Mayor?" says the Dean, with a nod of good-natured recognition of his Fetch "How is that,

Mr Mayor?"

"I am not aware," Mr Sapsea remarks, looking about him for information, "to what the Very Reverend the Dean does me the honour of referring" And then falls to studying his original in minute points of detail

"Durdles," Mr Tope hints

"Ay!" the Dean echoes, "Durdles, Durdles!"

"The truth is, sir," explains Jasper, "that my curiosity in the man was first really stimulated by Mr Sapsea Mr Sapsea's knowledge of mankind and power of drawing out whatever is recluse or odd around him, first led to my bestowing a second thought upon the man though of course I had met him constantly about You would not be surprised by this, Mr Dean, if you had seen Mr Sapsea deal with him in his own parlour, as I did"

"Oh!" cried Sapsea, picking up the ball thrown to him with ineffable complacency and pomposity, "yes, yes The Very Reverend the Dean refers to that? Yes I happened to bring Durdles and Mr Jasper together I

regard Durdles as a Character"

"A character, Mr Sapsea, that with a few skilful touches you turn inside out," says Jasper

"Nay, not quite that," returns the lumbering auctioneer "I may have a little influence over him, perhaps, and a little insight into his character, perhaps. The Very Reverend the Dean will please to bear in mind that I have seen the world." Here Mr Sapsea gets a little behind the Dean, to inspect his coat-buttons

"Well!" says the Dean, looking about him to see what has become of his copyist "I hope, Mr Mayor, you will use your study and knowledge of Dirdles to the good purpose of exhorting him not to break our worthy and respected Choir-Master's neck, we cannot afford it, his head and

voice are much too valuable to us "

Mr Tope is again highly entertained, and, having fallen into respectful convulsions of laughter, subsides into a deferential murmur, importing that surely any gentleman would deem it a pleasure and an honour to have his neck broken, in return for such a compliment from such a source

"I will take it upon myself, sir," observes Sapsea, loftily, "to answer for Mr Jasper's neck I will tell Durdles to be careful of it He will mind what I say How is it at present endangered?" he inquires, looking about him with

magnificent patronage

"Only by my making a moonlight expedition with Durdles among the tombs, vaults, towers, and ruins," returns Jasper "You remember suggesting, when you brought us together, that, as a lover of the picturesque, it might be worth my while?"

"I remember!" replies the auctioneer And the solemn

idiot really believes that he does remember

"Profiting by your hint," pursues Jasper, "I have had some day rambles with the extraordinary old fellow, and we are to make a moonlight hole-and-corner exploration to-night"

"And here he is," says the Dean

Durdles, with his dinner-bundle in his hand, is indeed beheld slouching towards them Slouching nearer, and perceiving the Dean, he pulls off his hat, and is slouching away with it under his arm, when Mr Sapsea stops him

"Mind you take care of my friend," is the injunction

Mr Sapsea lays upon him

"What friend o' yourn is dead?" asks Durdles " No orders has come in for any friend o' yourn "

"I mean my live friend there"

"Oh! him 5" says Durdles "He can take care of himself, can Mister Jarsper"

"But do you take care of him, too," says Sapsea

Whom Durdles (there being command in his tone) surlily surveys from head to foot

"With submission to his Reverence the Dean, if you'll mind what concerns you, Mr Sapsea, Durdles he'll mind

what concerns him "

"You're out of temper," says Mr Sapsea, winking to the company to observe how smoothly he will manage him "My friend concerns me, and Mr Jasper is my friend And you are my friend "

"Don't you get into a bad habit of boasting," retorts Durdles, with a grave cautionary nod "It'll grow upon

you"

"You are out of temper," says Sapsea again, reddening, but again winking to the company

"I own to it," returns Durdles, "I don't like liberties" Mr Sapsea winks a third wink to the company, as who should say "I think you will agree with me that I have settled his business," and stalks out of the controversy

Durdles then gives the Dean a good evening, and adding, as he puts his hat on, "You'll find me at home, Mister Jarsper, as agreed when you want me, I'm a-going home to clean myself," soon slouches out of sight This going home to clean himself is one of the man's incomprehensible compromises with inexorable facts, he, and his hat, and his boots, and his clothes, never showing any trace of cleaning, but being uniformly in one condition of dust and grit

The lamplighter now dotting the quiet Close with specks of light, and running at a great rate up and down his little ladder with that object-his little ladder under the sacred shadow of whose inconvenience generations had grown up, and which all Cloisterham would have stood aghast at the idea of abolishing—the Dean withdraws to his dinner, Mr Tope to his tea, and Mr Jasper to his piano.

There, with no light but that of the fire, he sits chanting choir-music in a low and beautiful voice, for two or three hours, in short until it has been for some time dark, and the moon is about to rise

Then he closes his piano softly, softly changes his coat for a pea-jacket, with a goodly wicker-cased bottle in its largest pocket, and putting on a low-crowned flap-brimmed hat, goes softly out. Why does he move so softly tonight? No outward reason is apparent for it. Can there be any sympathetic reason crouching darkly within him?

Repairing to Durdles's unfinished house, or hole in the city wall, and seeing a light within it, he softly picks his course among the gravestones, monuments, and stony lumber of the yard, already touched here and there, sidewise, by the rising moon. The two journeymen have left their two great saws sticking in their blocks of stone, and two skeleton journeymen out of the Dance of Death might be grinning in the shadow of their sheltering sentry-boxes, about to slash away at cutting out the gravestones of the next two people destined to die in Cloisterham. Likely enough, the two think little of that now, being alive, and perhaps merry. Curious, to make a guess at the two,—or say one of the two!

"Ho! Durdles!"

The light moves, and he appears with it at the door He would seem to have been "cleaning himself" with the aid of a bottle, jug, and tymbler, for no other cleansing instruments are visible in the bare brick room, with rafters overhead and no plastered ceiling, into which he shows his visitor

"Are you ready?"

"I am ready, Mister Jarsper Let the old uns come out if they dare, when we go among their tombs My spirit is ready for 'em'"

"Do you mean animal spirits, or ardent?"

"The one's the t'other," answers Durdles, "and I mean 'em both"

He takes a lantern from a hook, puts a match or two in his pocket wherewith to light it, should there be need; and they go out together, dinner-bundle and all. Surely an unaccountable sort of expedition! That Durdles himself, who is always prowling among old graves, and ruins, like a Ghoule—that he should be stealing forth to climb, and dive, and wander without an object, is nothing extraordinary, but that the Choir-Master or any one else should hold it worth his while to be with him, and to study moonlight effects in such company, is another affair Surely an unaccountable sort of expedition, therefore!

"'Ware that there mound by the yard-gate, Mister

Jarsper "

"I see it What is it?"

"Tame"

Mr Jasper stops, and waits for him to come up, for he lags behind "What you call quick-lime?"

"Ay !" says Durdles, "quick enough to eat your boots With a little handy stirring, quick enough to eat your

bones"

They go on, presently passing the red windows of the Travellers' Twopenny, and emerging into the clear moonlight of the Monks' Vineyard This crossed, they come

to Minor Canon Corner of which the greater part lies in shadow until the moon shall rise higher in the sky

The sound of a closing house-door strikes their ears, and two men come out These are Mr Crisparkle and Neville Jasper, with a strange and sudden smile upon his face, lays the palm of his hand upon the breast of Dur-

dles, stopping him where he stands

At that end of Minor Canon Corner the shadow is profound in the existing state of the light at that end, too, there is a piece of old dwarf wall, breast high, the only remaining boundary of what was once a garden, but is now the thoroughfare Jasper and Durdles would have turned this wall in another instant, but, stopping so short, stand behind it

"Those two are only sauntering," Jasper whispers, "they will go out into the moonlight soon. Let us keep quiet here, or they will detain us, or want to join us, or what not "

Durdles nods assent, and falls to munching some frag-ments from his bundle Jasper folds his arms upon the

top of the wall, and, with his chin resting on them, watches He takes no note whatever of the Minor Canon, but watches Neville, as though his eye were at the trigger of a loaded rifle, and he had covered him, and were going to fire A sense of destructive power is so expressed in his face, that even Durdles pauses in his munching, and looks at him, with an unmunched something in his cheek

Meanwhile Mr Crisparkle and Neville walk to and fro, quietly talking together What they say, cannot be heard consecutively, but Mr Jasper has already distinguished his own name more than once

"This is the first day of the week," Mr Crisparkle can be distinctly heard to observe, as they turn back, "and the last day of the week is Christmas Eve"

"You may be certain of me, sir"

The echoes were favourable at those points, but as the two approach, the sound of their talking becomes confused again. The word "confidence," shattered by the echoes, but still capable of being pieced together, is uttered by Mr Crisparkle. As they draw still nearer, this fragment of a reply is heard. "Not deserved yet, but shall be, sir." As they turn away again, Jasper again hears his own name, in connection with the words from Mr Crisparkle. "Remember that I said I answered for you confidently." Then the sound of their talk becomes confused again, they halting for a little while, and some earnest action on the part of Neville succeeding. When they move once more, Mr Crisparkle is seen to look up at the sky, and to point before him. They then slowly disappear, passing out into the moonlight at the opposite end of the Corner.

It is not until they are gone, that Mr Jasper moves But then he turns to Durdles, and bursts into a fit of laughter Durdles, who still has that suspended something in his cheek, and who sees nothing to laugh at, stares at him until Mr Jasper lays his face down on his arms to have his laugh out Then Durdles bolts the something,

as if desperately resigning himself to indigestion.

Among those secluded nooks there is very little stir or movement after dark. There is little enough in the high tide of the day, but there is next to none at night Besides

that the cheerfully frequented High Street lies nearly parallel to the spot (the old Cathedral rising between the two), and is the natural channel in which the Cloisterham traffic flows, a certain awful hush pervades the ancient pile, the clossters, and the churchyard, after dark, which not many people care to encounter Ask the first hundred citizens of Cloisterham, met at random in the streets at noon, if they believed in Ghosts, they would tell'you no, but put them to choose at night between these eerie Precincts and the thoroughfare of shops, and you would find that ninetynine declared for the longer round and the more frequented The cause of this is not to be found in any local superstition that attaches to the Precincts-albeit a mysterious lady, with a child in her arms and a rope dangling from her neck, has been seen flitting about there by sundry witnesses as intangible as herself—but it is to be sought in the innate shrinking of dust with the breath of life in it from dust out of which the breath of life has passed, also, in the widely diffused, and almost as widely unacknowledged, reflection "If the dead do, under any circumstances, become visible to the living, these are such likely surroundings for the purpose that I, the living, will get out of them as soon as I can"

Hence, when Mr Jasper and Durdles pause to glance around them, before descending into the crypt by a small side door, of which the latter has a key, the whole expanse of moonlight in their view is utterly deserted. One might fancy that the tide of life was stemmed by Mi Jasper's own gatehouse. The murmur of the tide is heard beyond, but no wave passes the archway, over which his lamp burns red behind his curtain, as if the building were a Lighthouse.

They enter, locking themselves in, descend the rugged steps, and are down in the Crypt The lantern is not wanted, for the moonlight strikes in at the groined windows, bare of glass, the broken frames for which cast patterns on the ground The heavy pillars which support the roof engender masses of black shade, but between them there are lanes of light Up and down these lanes they walk, Durdles discoursing of the "old uns" he yet counts on disinterring, and slapping a wall, in which he considers

"a whole family on 'em" to be stoned and earthed up, just as if he were a familiar friend of the family The taciturnity of Durdles is for the time overcome by Mr Jasper's wicker bottle, which circulates freely,—in the sense, that is to say, that its contents enter freely into Mr Durdles's circulation, while Mr Jasper only rinses his mouth once, and casts forth the rinsing

They are to ascend the great Tower On the steps by which they rise to the Cathedral, Durdles pauses for new store of breath The steps are very dark, but out of the darkness they can see the lanes of light they have traversed Durdles seats himself upon a step Mr Jasper seats himself upon another The odour from the wicker bottle (which has somehow passed into Durdles's keeping) soon intimates that the cork has been taken out, but this is not ascertainable through the sense of sight, since neither can descry the other And yet, in talking, they turn to one another, as though their faces could commune together

"This is good stuff, Mister Jarsper!"

"It is very good stuff, I hope I bought it on purpose"
"They don't show, you see, the old uns don't, Mister
Jarsper!"

"It would be a more confused world than it is, if they

could "

"Well, it would lead towards a mixing of things," Durdles acquiesces pausing on the remark, as if the idea of ghosts had not previously presented itself to him in a merely inconvenient light, domestically or chronologically "But do you think there may be Ghosts of other things, though not of men and women?"

"What things? Flower-beds and watering-pots? horses

and harness?"

"No Sounds"

"What sounds?"

"Cries"

"What cries do you mean? Chairs to mend?"

"No I mean screeches Now I'll tell you, Mr Jarsper Wait a bit till I put the bottle right" Here the cork is evidently taken out again, and replaced again "There! Now it's right! This time last year, only a few days later,

I happened to have been doing what was correct by the season, in the way of giving it the welcome it had a right to expect, when them townboys set on me at their worst At length I gave 'em the slip, and turned in here. And here I fell asleep. And what woke me? The ghost of a cry. The ghost of one terrific shriek, which shriek was followed by the ghost of the howl of a dog a long dismal woeful howl, such as a dog gives when a person's dead. That was my last Christmas Eve."

"What do you mean?" is the very abrupt, and, one

might say, fierce retort

"I mean that I made inquiries everywhere about, and, that no living ears but mine heard either that cry or that howl So I say they was both ghosts, though why they came to me, I've never made out"

"I thought you were another kind of man," says Jasper,

scornfully

"So I thought myself," answers Durdles, with his usual composure, "and yet I was picked out for it"

Jasper had risen suddenly, when he asked him what he meant, and he now says, "Come, we shall freeze here,

lead the way "

Durdles complies, not over-steadily, opens the door at the top of the steps with the key he has already used, and so emerges on the Cathedral level, in a passage at the side of the chancel Here, the moonlight is so very bright again that the colours of the nearest stained-glass window are thrown upon their faces. The appearance of the unconscious Durdles, holding the door open for his companion to follow, as if from the grave, is ghastly enough, with a purple band across his face, and a yellow splash upon his brow, but he bears the close scrutiny of his companion in an insensible way, although it is prolonged while the latter fumbles among his pockets for a key confided to him that will open an iron gate, so as to enable them to pass to the staircase of the great tower

"That and the bottle are enough for you to carry," he says, giving it to Durdles, "hand your bundle to me, I am younger and longer-winded than you" Durdles hesitates for a moment between bundle and bottle, but gives

the preference to the bottle as being by far the better company, and consigns the dry weight to his fellow-explorer

Then they go up the winding staircase of the great tower, toilsomely, turning and turning, and lowering their heads to avoid the stairs above, or the rough stone pivot around which they twist Durdles has lighted his lantern, by drawing from the cold hard wall a spark of that mysterious fire which lurks in everything, and, guided by this speck, they clamber up among the cobwebs and the dust Their way lies through strange places Twice or thrice they emerge into level low-arched galleries, whence they can look down into the moonlit nave, and where Durdles, waving his lantern, waves the dim angels' heads upon the corbels of the roof, seeming to watch their progress Anon they turn into narrower and steeper staircases, and the night-air begins to blow upon them, and the chirp of some startled jackdaw or frightened rook precedes the heavy beating of wings in a confined space, and the beating down of dust and straws upon their heads At last, leaving their light behind a stair—for it blows fresh up here—they look down on Cloisterham, fair to see in the moonlight its ruined habitations and sanctuaries of the dead, at the tower's base its moss-softened red-tiled roofs and red-brick houses of the living, clustered beyond its river winding down from the mist on the horizon, as though that were its source, and already heaving with a restless knowledge of its approach towards the sea

Once again, an unaccountable expedition this! Jasper (always moving softly with no visible reason) contemplates the scene, and especially that stillest part of it which the Cathedral overshadows But he contemplates Durdles quite as curiously, and Durdles is by times conscious of

his watchful eyes

Only by times, because Durdles is growing drowsy As aeronauts lighten the load they carry, when they wish to rise, similarly Durdles has lightened the wicker bettle in coming up Snatches of sleep surprise him on his legs, and stop him in his talk A mild fit of calenture seizes him, in which he deems that the ground, so far below, is on a level with the tower, and would as lief walk off the tower

into the air as not Such is his state when they begin to come down And as aeronauts make themselves heavier when they wish to descend, similarly Durdles charges himself with more liquid from the wicker bottle, that he may come down the better

The iron gate attained and locked—but not before Durdles has tumbled twice, and cut an eyebrow open once—they descend into the crypt again, with the intent of issuing forth as they entered But, while returning among those lanes of light, Durdles becomes so very uncertain, both of foot and speech, that he half drops, half throws himself down, by one of the heavy pillars, scarcely less heavy than itself, and indistinctly appeals to his companion for forty winks of a second each

"If you will have it so, or must have it so," replies Jasper, "I'll not leave you here Take them, while I walk to and fro"

Durdles is asleep at once, and in his sleep he dreams a dream

It is not much of a dream, considering the vast extent of the domains of dreamland, and their wonderful productions, it is only remarkable for being unusually restless and unusually real. He dreams of lying there, asleep, and yet counting his companion's footsteps as he walks to and fro He dreams that the footsteps die away into distance of time and of space, and that something touches him, and that something falls from his hand. Then something clinks and gropes about, and he dreams that he is alone for so long a time, that the lanes of light take new directions as the moon advances in her course. From succeeding unconsciousness he passes into a dream of slow uneasiness from cold, and painfully awakes to a perception of the lanes of light—really changed, much as he had dreamed—and Jasper walking among them, beating his hands and feet

"Halloa!" Durdles cries out, unmeaningly alarmed

[&]quot;Awake at last?" says Jasper, coming up to him "Do you know that your forties have stretched into thousands?"

[&]quot; No "

[&]quot;They have, though."

[&]quot;What's the time?"

"Hark! The bells are going in the Tower!"

They strike four quarters, and then the great bell strikes

"Two!" cries Durdles, scrambling up, "why didn't

you try to wake me, Mister Jarsper,"

"I did I might as well have tried to wake the dead—your own family of dead, up in the corner there"

"Did you touch me?"

"Touch you! Yes Shook you"

As Durdles recalls that touching something in his dream, he looks down on the pavement, and sees the key of the

crypt door lying close to where he himself lay

"I dropped you, did I?" he says, picking it up, and recalling that part of his dream. As he gathers himself up again into an upright position, or into a position as nearly upright as he ever maintains, he is again conscious of being watched by his companion

"Well?" says Jasper, smiling, "are you quite ready?

Pray don't hurry "

"Let me get my bundle right, Mister Jarsper, and I'm with you"

As he ties it afresh, he is once more conscious that he is

very narrowly observed

"What do you suspect me of, Mister Jarsper?" he asks with drunken displeasure "Let them as has any suspicions of Durdles name 'em"

"I've no suspicions of you, my good Mr Durdles, but I have suspicions that my bottle was filled with something stiffer than either of us supposed. And I also have suspicions," Jasper adds, taking it from the pavement and turning it bottom upwards, "that it's empty"

Durdles condescends to laugh at this Continuing to chuckle when his laugh is over, as though remonstrant with himself on his drinking powers, he rolls to the door and unlocks it They both pass out, and Durdles relocks it,

and pockets his key

"A thousand thanks for a curious and interesting night," says Jasper, giving him his hand, "you can make your own way home?"

"I should think so!" answers Durdles. "If you was

to offer Durdles the affront to show him his way home, he wouldn't go home

Durdles wouldn't go home till morning, And then Durdles wouldn't go home,

Durdles wouldn't " This with the utmost defiance

"Good-night, then"

"Good-night, Mister Jarsper"

Each is turning his own way, when a sharp whistle rends the silence, and the jargon is yelped out —

"Widdy widdy wen!
I—ket—ches—Im—out—ar—ter—ten
Widdy widdy wy!
Then—E—don't—go—then—I—shy—
Widdy Widdy Wake-cock warning!"

Instantly afterwards, a rapid fire of stones rattles at the Cathedral wall, and the hideous small boy is beheld opposite

dancing in the moonlight

"What! Is that baby-devil on the watch there!" cries Tasper in a fury so quickly roused, and so violent, that he seems an older devil himself "I shall shed the blood of that impish wretch! I know I shall do it!" Regardless of the fire, though it hits him more than once, he rushes at Deputy, collars him, and tries to bring him across Deputy is not to be so easily brought across diabolical insight into the strongest part of his position, he is no sooner taken by the throat than he curls up his legs, forces his assailant to hang him, as it were, and gurgles in his throat, and screws his body, and twists, as already undergoing the first agonies of strangulation There is nothing for it but to drop him He instantly gets himself together, backs over to Durdles, and cries to his assailant, gnashing the great gap in front of his mouth with rage and malice -

"I'll blind yer, s'elp me! I'll stone yer eyes out, s'elp me! If I don't have yer eyesight, bellows me!" At the same time dodging behind Durdles, and snarling at Jasper, now from this side of him, and now from that prepared, if pounced upon, to dart away in all manner of curvilinear directions, and, if run down after all, to grovel in the dust, and cry "Now, hit me when I'm down! Do it!"

"Don't hurt the boy, Mister Jarsper," urges Durdles, shielding him "Recollect yourself"

"He followed us to-night, when we first came here!"

"Yer lie, I didn't!" replies Deputy, in his one form of polite contradiction

"He has been prowling near us ever since!"

"Yer lie, I haven't," returns Deputy "I'd only jist come out for my elth when I see you two a-coming out of the Kinfreederel If

"I-ket-ches-Im-out-ar-ter-ten 1"

(with the usual rhythm and dance, though dodging behind Durdles), "it ain't my fault, is it?"

"Take him home, then," retorts Jasper, ferociously, though with a strong check upon himself, "and let my eyes

be rid of the sight of you!"

Deputy, with another sharp whistle, at once expressing his relief, and his commencement of a milder stoning of Mr Durdles, begins stoning that respectable gentleman home as if he were a reluctant ox Mr Jasper goes to his gatehouse, brooding And thus, as everything comes to an end, the unaccountable expedition comes to an end—for the time

CHAPTER XIL

BOTH AT THEIR BEST

MISS TWINKLETON'S establishment was about to undergo a serene hush The Christmas recess was at hand What had once, and at no remote period, been called, even by the erudite Miss Twinkleton herself, "the half," but what was now called, as being more elegant, and more strictly collegiate, "the term," would expire to-morrow A noticeable relaxation of discipline had for some few days pervaded the Nuns' House Club suppers had occurred in the bedrooms, and a dressed tongue had been carved with a pair of scissors, and handed round with the curling tongs Portions of marmalade had likewise been distributed on a

service of plates constructed of curlpaper, and cowslip wine had been quaffed from the small squat measuring glass in which little Rickitts (a junior of weakly constitution) took her steel drops daily. The housemaids had been bribed with various fragments of riband, and sundry pairs of shoes more or less down at heel, to make no mention of crumbs in the beds, the airiest costumes had been worn on these festive occasions, and the daring Miss Ferdinand had even surprised the company with a sprightly solo on the comb-and-curlpaper, until suffocated in her own pillow by two flowing-haired executioners

Nor were these the only tokens of dispersal Boxes appeared in the bedrooms (where they were capital at other times), and a surprising amount of packing took place, out of all proportion to the amount packed Largess, in the form of odds and ends of cold cream and pomatum, and also of hairpins, was freely distributed among the attendants On charges of inviolable secrecy, confidences were interchanged respecting golden youth of England expected to call, "at home," on the first opportunity Miss Giggles (deficient in sentiment) did indeed profess that she, for her part, acknowledged such homage by making faces at the golden youth, but this young lady was outvoted by an immense majority

On the last night before a recess, it was always expressly made a point of honour that nobody should go to sleep, and that Ghosts should be encouraged by all possible means. This compact invariably broke down, and all the young ladies went to sleep very soon and got up very early

The concluding ceremony came off at twelve o'clock on the day of departure, when Miss Twinkleton, supported by Mrs Tisher, held a drawing-room in her own apartment (the globes already covered with brown Holland), where glasses of white wine and plates of cut pound-cake were discovered on the table. Miss Twinkleton then said: Ladies, another revolving year had brought us round to that festive period at which the first feelings of our nature bounded in our—Miss Twinkleton was annually going to add "bosoms," but annually stopped on the brink of that expression, and substituted "hearts" Hearts, our hearts

Hem! Again a revolving year, ladies, had brought us to a pause in our studies—let us hope our greatly advanced studies—and, like the mariner in his bark, the warrior in his tent, the captive in his dungeon, and the traveller in his various conveyances, we yearned for home Did we say, on such an occasion, in the opening words of Mr Addison's impressive tragedy -

> "The dawn is overcast, the morning lowers, And heavily in clouds brings on the day, The great, th' important day-?"

Not so From horizon to zenith all was couleur de rose, for all was redolent of our relations and friends Might we find them prospering as we expected, might they find us prospering as they expected! Ladies, we would now, with our love to one another, wish one another good-bye, and happiness, until we met again And when the time should come for our resumption of those pursuits which (here a general depression set in all round), pursuits which, pursuits which,—then let us ever remember what was said by the Spartan General, in words too trite for repetition, at the battle it were superfluous to specify

The handmaidens of the establishment, in their best caps, then handed the trays, and the young ladies sipped and crumbled, and the bespoken coaches began to choke the street Then leave-taking was not long about, and Miss Twinkleton, in saluting each young lady's cheek, confided to her an exceedingly neat letter, addressed to her next friend at law, "with Miss Twinkleton's best compliments" in the corner This missive she handed with an air as if it had not the least connection with the bill, but were something in the nature of a delicate and novful surprise

So many times had Rosa seen such dispersals, and so very little did she know of any other Home, that she was contented to remain where she was, and was even better contented than ever before, having her latest friend with her And yet her latest friendship had a blank place in it of which she could not fail to be sensible Helena Landless, having been a party to her brother's revelation about Rosa, and having entered into that compact of silence with Mr Crisparkle, shrank from any allusion to Edwin Drood's name Why she so avoided it, was mysterious to Rosa, but she perfectly perceived the fact But for the fact, she might have relieved her own little perplexed heart of some of its doubts and hesitations, by taking Helena into her confidence As it was, she had no such vent she could only ponder on her own difficulties, and wonder more and more why this avoidance of Edwin's name should last, now that she knew—for so much Helena had told her—that a good understanding was to be reestablished between the two young men, when Edwin came down

It would have made a pretty picture, so many pretty girls kissing Rosa in the cold porch of the Nuns' House, and that sunny little creature peeping out of it (unconscious of sly faces carved on spout and gable peeping at her), and waving farewells to the departing coaches, as if she represented the spirit of rosy youth abiding in the place to keep it bright and warm in its desertion hoarse High Street became musical with the cry, in various silvery voices, "Good-bye, Rosebud darling!" and the effigy of Mr Sapsea's father over the opposite doorway seemed to say to mankind "Gentlemen, favour me with your attention to this charming little last lot left behind, and bid with a spirit worthy of the occasion!" Then the staid street, so unwontedly sparkling, youthful, and fresh for a few rippling moments, ran dry, and Cloisterham was itself again

If Rosebud in her bower now waited Edwin Drood's coming with an uneasy heart, Edwin for his part was uneasy too With far less force of purpose in his composition than the childish beauty, crowned by acclamation fairy queen of Miss Twinkleton's establishment, he had a conscience, and Mr Grewgious had pricked it That gentleman's steady convictions of what was right and what was wrong in such a case as his, were neither to be frowned aside nor laughed aside They would not be moved But for the dinner in Staple Inn, and but for the ring he carried in the breast pocket of his coat, he would

have drifted into their wedding-day without another pause for real thought, loosely trusting that all would go well, left alone But that serious putting him on his truth to the living and the dead had brought him to a check. He must either give the ring to Rosa, or he must take it back. Once put into this narrowed way of action, it was curious that he began to consider Rosa's claims upon him more unselfishly than he had ever considered them before, and began to be less sure of himself than he had ever been in all his easy-going days

"I will be guided by what she says, and by how we get on," was his decision, walking from the gatehouse to the Nuns' House "Whatever comes of it, I will bear his words in mind, and try to be true to the living and the

dead "

Rosa was dressed for walking She expected him It was a bright frosty day, and Miss Twinkleton had already graciously sanctioned fresh air Thus they got out together before it became necessary for either Miss Twinkleton, or the deputy high-priest Mrs Tisher, to lay even so much as one of those usual offerings on the shrine of Propriety

"My dear Eddy," said Rosa, when they had turned out of the High Street, and had got among the quiet walks in the neighbourhood of the Cathedral and the river "I want to say something very serious to you I have been

thinking about it for a long, long time "

"I want to be serious with you too, Rosa dear I mean

to be serious and earnest"

"Thank you, Eddy And you will not think me unkind because I begin, will you? You will not think I speak for myself only, because I speak first? That would not be generous, would it? And I know you are generous!"

He said, "I hope I am not ungenerous to you, Rosa"

He called her Pussy no more Never again

"And there is no fear," pursued Rosa, "of our quarrelling, is there? Because, Eddy," clasping her hand on his arm, "we have so much reason to be very lement to each other!"

[&]quot;We will be, Rosa"

That's a dear good boy! Eddy, let us be courageous Let us change to brother and sister from this day forth"

"Never be husband and wife?"

"Never!"

Neither spoke again for a little while But after that pause he said, with some effort —

"Of course I know that this has been in both our minds, Rosa, and of course I am in honour bound to

confess freely that it does not originate with you"

"No, nor with you, dear," she returned, with pathetic earnestness "That sprung up between us You are not truly happy in our engagement, I am not truly happy in it Oh, I am so sorry, so sorry!" And there she broke into tears

"I am deeply sorry too, Rosa Deeply sorry for you"

"And I for you poor boy! And I for you!"

This pure young feeling, this gentle and forbearing feeling of each towards the other, brought with it its reward in a softening light that seemed to shine on their position. The relations between them did not look wilful, or capricious, or a failure, in such a light, they became elevated into something more self-denying, honourable, affectionate, and true

"If we knew yesterday," said Rosa, as she dried her eyes, "and we did know yesterday, and on many, many yesterdays, that we were far from right together in those relations which were not of our own choosing, what better could we do to-day than change them? It is natural that we should be sorry, and you see how sorry we both are, but how much better to be sorry now than then?"

"When, Rosa?"

"When it would be too late And then we should be angry, besides"

Another silence fell upon them

"And you know," said Rosa, innocently, "you couldn't like me then, and you can always like me now, for I shall not be a drag upon you, or a worry to you And I can always like you now, and your sister will not tease or trifle with you I often did when I was not your sister, and I beg your pardon for it"

"Don't let us come to that, Rosa, or I shall want more

pardoning than I like to think of "

"No, indeed, Eddy, you are too hard, my generous boy, upon yourself Let us sit down, brother, on these ruins, and let me tell you how it was with us I think I know, for I have considered about it very much since you were here last time You liked me, didn't you? You thought I was a nice little thing?"

"Everybody thinks that, Rosa"

"Do they?" She knitted her brow musingly for a moment and then flashed out with the bright little introduction "Well, but say they do Surely it was not enough that you should think of me only as other people did, now, was it?"

The point was not to be got over
It was not enough

"And that is just what I mean, that is just how it was with us," said Rosa "You liked me very well, and you had grown used to me, and had grown used to the idea of our being married You accepted the situation as an inevitable kind of thing, didn't you? It was to be, you thought, and why discuss or dispute it?"

It was new and strange to him to have himself presented to himself so clearly, in a glass of her holding up. He had always patronized her, in his superiority to her share of woman's wit. Was that but another instance of something radically amiss in the terms on which they had been

gliding towards a life-long bondage?

"All this that I say of you is true of me as well, Eddy Unless it was, I might not be bold enough to say it. Only, the difference between us was, that by little and little there crept into my mind a habit of thinking about it instead of dismissing it. My life is not so busy as yours, you see, and I have not so many things to think of. So I thought about it very much, and I cried about it very much too (though that was not your fault, poor boy), when all at once my guardian came down to prepare for my leaving the Nuns' House. I tried to hint to him that I was not quite settled in my mind, but I hesitated and failed, and he didn't understand me. But he is a good, good man And he put before me so kindly, and yet so strongly, how

seriously we ought to consider, in our circumstances, that I resolved to speak to you the next moment we were alone and grave And if I seemed to come to it easily just now, because I came to it all at once, don't think it was so really, Eddy, for oh, it was very, very hard, and oh, I am very, very sorry!"

Her full heart broke into tears again. He put his arm about her waist, and they walked by the river-side together

"Your guardian has spoken to me too, Rosa dear I saw him before I left London" His right hand was in his breast, seeking the ring, but he checked it, as he thought "If I am to take it back, why should I tell her of it?"

"And that made you more serious about it, didn't it, Eddy? And if I had not spoken to you as I have, you would have spoken to me? I hope you can tell me so? I don't like it to be all my doing, though it & so much better for us"

"Yes, I should have spoken, I should have put everything before you, I came intending to do it But I never could have spoken to you as you have spoken to me, Rosa"

"Don't say you mean so coldly or unkindly, Eddy,

please, if you can help it "

"I mean so sensibly and delicately, so wisely and

affectionately "

"That's my dear brother!" She kissed his hand in a little rapture "The dear girls will be dreadfully disappointed," added Rosa, laughing, with the dewdrops glistening in her bright eyes "They have looked forward to it so, poor pets!"

"Ah! but I fear it will be a worse disappointment to Jack," said Edwin Drood, with a start "I never thought

of Tack!"

Her swift and intent look at him as he said the words could no more be recalled than a flash of lightning can But it appeared as though she would have instantly recalled it, if she could, for she looked down, confused, and breathed quickly

"You don't doubt its being a blow to Jack, Rosa?"
She merely replied, and that evasively and hurriedly

Why should she? She had not thought about it He seemed, to her, to have so little to do with it

"My dear child! can you suppose that any one so wrapped up in another—Mrs Tope's expression not mine—as Jack is in me, could fail to be struck all of a heap by such a sudden and complete change in my life? I say sudden, because it will be sudden to him, you know "

She nodded twice or thrice, and her lips parted as if she would have assented But she uttered no sound, and

her breathing was no slower

"How shall I tell Jack?" said Edwin, ruminating If he had been less occupied with the thought, he must have seen her singular emotion "I never thought of Jack It must be broken to him, before the town-crier knows it I dine with the dear fellow to-morrow and next day—Christmas Eve and Christmas Day—but it would never do to spoil his feast-days He always worries about me, and moddley-coddleys in the merest trifles The news is sure to overset him. How on earth shall this be broken to Jack?"

"He must be told, I suppose?" said Rosa

"My dear Rosa! who ought to be in our confidence, if not Jack?"

"My guardian promised to come down, if I should write and ask him I am going to do so Would you like to leave it to him?"

"A bright idea!" cried Edwin "The other trustee Nothing more natural He comes down, he goes to Jack, he relates what we have agreed upon, and he states our case better than we could He has already spoken feelingly to you, he has already spoken feelingly to you, he has already spoken feelingly to me, and he'll put the whole thing feelingly to Jack That's it! I am not a coward, Rosa, but to tell you a secret, I am a little afraid of Jack"

"No, no! you are not afraid of him!" cried Rosa, turn-

ing white, and clasping her hands.

"Why, sister Rosa, sister Rosa, what do you see from the turret?" said Edwin, rallying her "My dear girl!" "You frightened me"

"Most unintentionally, but I am as sorry as if I had meant

to do it Could you possibly suppose for a moment, from any loose way of speaking of mine, that I was literally afraid of the dear fond fellow? What I mean is, that he is subject to a kind of paroxysm, or fit—I saw him in it once—and I don't know but that so great a surprise, coming upon him direct from me whom he is so wrapped up in, might bring it on perhaps. Which—and this is the secret I was going to tell you—is another reason for your guardian's making the communication. He is so steady, precise, and exact, that he will talk Jack's thoughts into shape, in no time whereas with me Jack is always impulsive and hurried, and, I may say, almost womanish."

Rosa seemed convinced Perhaps from her own very different point of view of "Jack," she felt comforted and protected by the interposition of Mr Grewgious between herself and him

And now, Edwin Drood's right hand closed again upon the ring in its little case, and again was checked by the consideration "It is certain, now, that I am to give it back to him, then why should I tell her of it?" That pretty sympathetic nature which could be so sorry for him in the blight of their childish hopes of happiness together, and could so quietly find itself alone in a new world to weave fresh wreaths of such flowers as it might prove to bear, the old world's flowers being withered, would be grieved by those sorrowful jewels, and to what purpose? Why should it be? They were but a sign of broken joys and baseless projects, in their very beauty they were (as the unlikeliest of men had said) almost a cruel satire on the loves, hopes, plans, of humanity, which are able to forecast nothing, and are so much brittle dust Let them He would restore them to her guardian when he came down, he in his turn would restore them to the cabmet from which he had unwillingly taken them, and there, like old letters or old vows, or other records of old aspirations come to nothing, they would be disregarded, until, being valuable, they were sold into circulation again, to repeat their former round

Let them be. Let them lie unspoken of, in his breast. However distinctly or indistinctly he entertained these thoughts, he arrived at the conclusion, Let them be Among the mighty store of wonderful chains that are for ever forging, day and night, in the vast iron-works of time and circumstance, there was one chain forged in the moment of that small conclusion, riveted to the foundations of heaven and earth, and gifted with invincible force to hold and drag

They walked on by the river They began to speak of their separate plans. He would quicken his departure from England, and she would remain where she was at least as long as Helena remained The poor dear girls should have their disappointment broken to them gently, and, as the first preliminary, Miss Twinkleton should be confided in by Rosa, even in advance of the reappearance of Mr Grewgious It should be made clear in all quarters that she and Edwin were the best of friends There had never been so serene an understanding between them since they were first affianced And yet there was one reservation on each side, on hers, that she intended through her guardian to withdraw herself immediately from the tuition of her music-master, on his, that he did already entertain some wandering speculations whether it might ever come to pass that he would know more of Miss Landless

The bright frosty day declined as they walked and spoke together. The sun dipped in the river far behind them, and the old city lay red before them, as their walk drew to a close. The moaning water cast its seaweed duskily at their feet, when they turned to leave its margin, and the rooks hovered above them with hoarse cries, darker splashes

in the darkening air

"I will prepare Jack for my flitting soon," said Edwin, in a low voice, "and I will but see your guardian when he comes, and then go before they speak together It will be better done without my being by Don't you think so?"

[&]quot;Yes"

[&]quot;We know we have done right, Rosa?"

[&]quot;Yes"

[&]quot;Weknow we are better so, even now?"

[&]quot;And shall be far, far better so by and by"
Still there was that lingering tenderness in their hearts

towards the old positions they were relinquishing, that they prolonged their parting. When they came among the elmtrees by the Cathedral, where they had last sat together, they stopped as by consent, and Rosa raised her face to his, as she had never raised it in the old days,—for they were old already

"God bless you, dear! Good-bye!" Good-bye!"

They kissed each other fervently

"Now, please take me home, Eddy, and let me be by

myself"

"Don't look round, Rosa," he cautioned her, as he drew her arm through his, and led her away "Didn't you see Tack?"

"No! Where?"

"Under the trees He saw us as we took leave of each other Poor fellow! he little thinks we have parted This will be a blow to him, I am much afraid!"

She hurried on, without resting, and hurried on until they had passed under the gatehouse into the street, once there, she asked —

"Has he followed us? You can look without seeming

to Is he behind?"

"No Yes, he is! He has just passed out under the gateway The dear sympathetic old fellow likes to keep us in sight I am afraid he will be bitterly disappointed!"

She pulled hurriedly at the handle of the hoarse old bell, and the gate soon opened Before going in, she gave him one last wide wondering look, as if she would have asked him with imploring emphasis "Oh! don't you understand?" And out of that look he vanished from her view

CHAPTER XIV

WHEN SHALL THESE THREE MEET AGAIN?

CHRISTMAS EVE in Cloisterham A few strange faces in the streets, a few other faces, half strange and half familiar, once the faces of Cloisterham children, now the faces

of men and women who come back from the outer world at long intervals to find the crty wonderfully shrunken in size, as if it had not washed by any means well in the meanwhile. To these, the striking of the Cathedral clock, and the cawing of the rooks from the Cathedral tower, are like voices of their nursery time. To such as these, it has happened in their dying hours afar oft, that they have imagined their chamber-floor to be strewn with the autumnal leaves fallen from the elm-trees in the Close so have the rustling sounds and fresh scents of their earliest impressions revived when the circle of their lives was very nearly traced, and the beginning and the end were drawing

close together Seasonable tokens are about Red berries shine here and there in the lattices of Minor Canon Corner, Mr and Mrs. Tope are daintily sticking sprigs of holly into the carving and sconces of the Cathedral stalls, as if they were sticking them into the coat-buttonholes of the Dean and Chapter Lavish piofusion is in the shops particularly in the articles of currants, raisins, spices, candied peel, and moist sugar An unusual aii of gallantry and dissipation is abroad, evinced in an immense bunch of mistletoe hanging in the greengrocer's shop doorway, and a poor little Twelfth Cake, culminating in the figure of a Harlequin-such a very poor little Twelfth Cake, that one would rather call it a Twenty-fourth Cake or a Forty-eighth Cake to be raffled for at the pastrycook's, terms one shilling per member Public amusements are not wanting The Wax-Work which made so deep an impression on the reflective mind of the Emperor of China is to be seen by particular desire during Christmas Week only, on the premises of the bankrupt livery-stable keeper up the lane, and a new grand comic Christmas pantomime is to be produced at the Theatre the latter heralded by the portrait of Signor Jacksonini the clown, saying "How do you do to-morrow?" quite as large as life and almost as miserably In short, Clossterham is up and doing though from this description the High School and Miss Twinkleton's are to be excluded From the former establishment the scholars have gone home, every one of them in love with one of Miss Twinkleton's young ladies (who knows nothing about it), and only the handmaidens flutter occasionally in the windows of the latter. It is noticed, by-the-bye, that these damsels become, within the limits of decorum, more skittish when thus intrusted with the concrete representation of their sex, than when dividing the representation with Miss Twinkleton's young ladies.

Three are to meet at the gatehouse to-night How

does each one of the three get through the day?

Neville Landless, though absolved from his books for the time by Mr Crisparkle—whose fresh nature is by no means insensible to the charms of a holiday-reads and writes in his quiet room, with a concentrated air, until it is two hours past noon. He then sets himself to clearing his table, to arranging his books, and to tearing up and burning his stray papers He makes a clean sweep of all untidy accumulations, puts all his drawers in order, and leaves no note or scrap of paper undestroyed, save such memoranda as bear directly on his studies done, he turns to his wardrobe, selects a few articles of ordinary wear-among them, change of stout shoes and socks for walking—and packs these in a knapsack This knapsack is new, and he bought it in the High Street yesterday He also purchased, at the same time and at the same place, a heavy walking-stick strong in the handle for the grip of the hand, and iron-shod He tries this, swings it, poises it, and lays it by, with the knapsack, on a window-seat By this time his arrangements are complete

He dresses for going out, and is in the act of going—indeed has left his room, and has met the Minor Canon on the staircase, coming out of his bedroom upon the same story—when he turns back again for his walking-stick, thinking he will carry it now Mr Crisparkle, who has paused on the staircase, sees it in his hand on his immediately reappearing, takes it from him, and asks him with

a smile how he chooses a stick?

"Really I don't know that I understand the subject," he answers "I chose it for its weight"

"Much too heavy, Neville, much too heavy"

"To rest upon in a long walk, sir?"

"Rest upon?" repeats Mr Crisparkle, throwing himself into pedestrian form "You don't rest upon it, you merely balance with it"

"I shall know better, with practice, sir I have not

lived in a walking country, you know "

"True," says Mr Crisparkle "Get into a little training, and we will have a few score miles together I should leave you nowhere now Do you come back before dinner?"

"I think not, as we dine early"

Mr Crisparkle gives him a bright nod and a cheerful good-bye, expressing (not without intention) absolute confidence and ease

Neville repairs to the Nuns' House, and requests that Miss Landless may be informed that her brother is there, by appointment He waits at the gate, not even crossing the threshold, for he is on his parole not to put himself in Rosa's way

His sister is at least as mindful of the obligation they have taken on themselves as he can be, and loses not a moment in joining him. They meet affectionately, avoid lingering there, and walk towards the upper inland country

"I am not going to tread upon forbidden ground, Helena," says Neville, when they have walked some distance and are turning, "you will understand in another moment that I cannot help referring to—what shall I say?—my infatuation"

"Had you not better avoid it, Neville? You know that

I can hear nothing"

"You can hear, my dear, what Mr Crisparkle has heard, and heard with approval"

"Yes, I can hear so much"

"Well, it is this I am not only unsettled and unhappy myself, but I am conscious of unsettling and interfering with other people. How do I know that, but for my unfortunate presence, you, and—and—the rest of that former party, our engaging guardian excepted, might be dining cheerfully in Minor Canon Corner to-morrow? Indeed it probably would be so I can see too well that I am not

high in the old lady's opinion, and it is easy to understand what an irksome clog I must be upon the hospitalities of her orderly house—especially at this time of year—when I must be kept asunder from this person, and there is such a reason for my not being brought into contact with that person, and an unfavourable reputation has preceded me with such another person, and so on I have put this very gently to Mr Crisparkle, for you know his self-denying ways, but still I have put it What I have laid much greater stress upon at the same time, is, that I am engaged in a miserable struggle with myself, and that a little change and absence may enable me to come through it the better So, the weather being bright and hard, I am going on a walking expedition, and intend taking myself out of everybody's way (my own included, I hope) to-morrow morning "

"When to come back?"

"In a fortnight"

"And going quite alone?"

"I am much better without company, even if there were any one but you to bear me company, my dear Helena"

"Mr Crisparkle entirely agrees, you say?"

"Entirely I am not sure but that at first he was inclined to think it rather a moody scheme, and one that might do a brooding mind harm But we took a moonlight walk last Monday night, to talk it over at leisure, and I represented the case to him as it really is I showed him that I do want to conquer myself, and that, this evening well got over, it is surely better that I should be away from here just now, than here I could hardly help meeting certain people walking together here, and that could do no good, and is certainly not the way to forget A fortnight hence, that chance will probably be over, for the time, and when it again rises for the last time, why, I can again go away Farther, I really do feel hopeful of bracing exercise and wholesome fatigue You know that Mr Crisparkle allows such things their full weight in the preservation of his own sound mind in his own sound body, and that his just spirit is not likely to maintain one set of natural laws for himself and another for me He yielded to my view of the matter, when convinced that I was honestly in earnest, and so with his full consent, I start tomorrow morning Early enough to be not only out of the streets, but out of hearing of the bells, when the good

people go to church "

Helena thinks it over, and thinks well of it Mr Crisparkle doing so, she would do so, but she does originally, out of her own mind, think well of it, as a healthy project, denoting a sincere endeavour and an active attempt at self-correction. She is inclined to pity him, poor fellow, for going away solitary on the great Christmas festival, but she feels it much more to the purpose to encourage him. And she does encourage him.

He will write to her?

He will write to her every alternate day, and tell her all his adventures

Does he send clothes on in advance of him?

"My dear Helena, no Travel like a pilgrim with wallet and staff My wallet—or my knapsack—is packed, and ready for strapping on , and here is my staff!"

He hands it to her, she makes the same remark as Mr Crisparkle, that it is very heavy, and gives it back to

him, asking what wood it is? Iron-wood

Up to this point he has been extremely cheerful Perhaps, the having to carry his case with her, and therefore to present it in its brightest aspect, has roused his spirits Perhaps, the having done so with success, is followed by a revulsion As the day closes in, and the city-lights begin to spring up before them, he grows depressed

"I wish I were not going to this dinner, Helena"

"Dear Neville, is it worth while to care much about it? Think how soon it will be over."

"How soon it will be over!" he repeats gloomily.

"Yes But I don't like it"

There may be a moment's awkwardness, she cheeringly represents to him, but it can only last a moment. He is quite sure of himself

"I wish I felt as sure of everything else, as I feel of

myself," he answers her

"How strangely you speak, dear! What do you mean?"

"Helena, I don't know I only know that I don't like it What a strange dead weight there is in the air!"

She calls his attention to those copperous clouds beyond the river, and says that the wind is rising. He scarcely speaks again, until he takes leave of her at the gate of the Nuns' House. She does not immediately enter, when they have parted, but remains looking after him along the street. Twice he passes the gatehouse, reluctant to enter At length, the Cathedral clock chiming one quarter, with a rapid turn he hurries in

And so he goes up the postern stair

Edwin Drood passes a solitary day Something of deeper moment than he had thought, has gone out of his life, and in the silence of his own chamber he wept for it last night. Though the image of Miss Landless still hovers in the background of his mind, the pretty, little affectionate creature, so much firmer and wiser than he had supposed, occupies its stronghold. It is with some misgiving of his own unworthiness that he thinks of her, and of what they might have been to one another, if he had been more in earnest some time ago, if he had set a higher value on her, if, instead of accepting his lot in life as an inheritance of course, he had studied the right way to its appreciation and enhancement. And still, for all this, and though there is a sharp heartache in all this, the vanity and caprice of youth sustain that handsome figure of Miss Landless in the background of his mind.

That was a curious look of Rosa's when they parted at the gate. Did it mean that she saw below the surface of his thoughts, and down into their twilight depths? Scarcely that, for it was a look of astonished and keen inquiry. He decides that he cannot understand it, though it was remark-

ably expressive

As he only waits for Mr Grewgious now, and will depart immediately after having seen him, he takes a sauntering leave of the ancient city and its neighbourhood. He recalls the time when Rosa and he walked here or there, mere children, full of the dignity of being engaged. Poor children! he thinks, with a pitying sadness

Finding that his watch has stopped, he turns into the jeweller's shop, to have it wound and set. The jeweller is knowing on the subject of a bracelet, which he begs leave to submit, in a general and quite aimless way. It would suit (he considers) a young bride, to perfection, especially if of a rather diminutive style of beauty. Finding the bracelet but coldly looked at, the jeweller invites attention to a tray of rings for gentlemen, here is a style of ring, now, he remarks—a very chaste signet—which gentlemen are much given to purchasing, when changing their condition. A ring of a very responsible appearance. With the date of their wedding-day engraved inside, several gentlemen have preferred it to any other kind of memento.

The rings are as coldly viewed as the bracelet Edwin tells the tempter that he wears no jewellery but his watch and chain, which were his father's, and his shirt-pin

Edwin takes his watch, puts it on, and goes out, thinking "Dear old Jack! If I were to make an extra crease in my neckcloth, he would think it worth noticing!"

He strolls about and about, to pass the time until the dinner hour. It somehow happens that Cloisterham seems reproachful to him to-day, has fault to find with him, as if he had not used it well, but is far more pensive with him than angry. His wonted carelessness is replaced by a wistful looking at, and dwelling upon, all the old landmarks. He will soon be far away, and may never see them again, he thinks. Poor youth!

As dusk draws on, he paces the Monks' Vineyard He has walked to and fro, full half an hour by the Cathedral

chimes, and it has closed in dark, before he becomes quite aware of a woman crouching on the ground near a wicket gate in a corner The gate commands a cross by-path, little used in the gloaming, and the figure must have been there all the time, though he has but gradually and lately made it out

He strikes into that path, and walks up to the wicket By the light of a lamp near it, he sees that the woman is of a haggard appearance, and that her weazen chin is resting on her hands, and that her eyes are staring—with an unwinking, blind sort of steadfastness—before her

Always kindly, but moved to be unusually kind this evening, and having bestowed kind words on most of the children and aged people he has met, he at once bends

down, and speaks to this woman

"Are you ill?"

"No, deary," she answers, without looking at him, and with no departure from her strange blind stare

" Are you blind?"

"No, deary"

"Are you lost, homeless, faint? What is the matter, that you stay here in the cold so long, without moving?"

By slow and stiff efforts, she appears to contract her vision until it can rest upon him, and then a curious film passes over her, and she begins to shake

He straightens himself, recoils a step, and looks down at her in a dread amazement, for he seems to know her

"Good Heaven!" he thinks, next moment "Like Jack

that night!"

As he looks down at her, she looks up at him, and whimpers "My lungs is weakly, my lungs is dreffle bad Poor me, poor me, my cough is rattling dry!" and coughs in confirmation horribly

"Where do you come from?"

"Come from London, deary" (Her cough still rending her)

"Where are you going to?"

"Back to London, deary I came here, looking for a needle in a haystack, and I ain't found it Lookee, deary, give me three-and-sixpence, and don't you be afeard for

me I'll get back to London then, and trouble no one. I'm in a business—Ah, me! It's slack, it's slack, and times is very bad!—but I can make a shift to live by it"

"Do you eat opium?"

"Smokes it," she replies with difficulty, still racked by her cough "Give me three-and-sixpence, and I'll lay it out well, and get back If you don't give me three-and-sixpence, don't give me a brass farden And if you do give me three-and-sixpence, deary, I'll tell you something"

He counts the money from his pocket, and puts it in her hand She instantly clutches it tight, and rises to her feet

with a croaking laugh of satisfaction

"Bless ye! Harkee, dear genl'mn What's your Cris'en

"Edwin"

"Edwin, Edwin, Edwin," she repeats, trailing off into a drowsy repetition of the word, and then asks suddenly it is the short of that name Eddy?"

"It is sometimes called so," he replies, with the colour

starting to his face

"Don't sweethearts call it so' " she asks, pondering

"How should I know?"

"Haven't you a sweetheart, upon your soul?"

"None"

She is moving away, with another "Bless ye, and thankee, deary!" when he adds "You were to tell me something, you may as well do so"

"So I was, so I was Well, then Whisper You be

thankful that your name ain't Ned "

He looks at her quite steadily, as he asks "Why?"

"Because it's a bad name to have just now"

"How a bad name?"

"A threatened name A dangerous name"

"The proverb says that threatened men live long," he

tells her, lightly.

"Then Ned—so threatened is he, wherever he may be while I am a-talking to you, deary—should live to all eternity!" replies the woman

She has leaned forward to say it in his ear, with her forefinger shaking before his eyes, and now huddles her-

self together, and with another "Bless ye, and thankee!" goes away in the direction of the Travellers' Lodging House

This is not an inspiriting close to a dull day. Alone, in a sequestered place, surrounded by vestiges of old time and decay, it rather has a tendency to call a shudder into being. He makes for the better-lighted streets, and resolves as he walks on to say nothing of this night, but to mention it to Jack (who alone calls him Ned), as an odd coincidence, to-morrow, of course only as a coincidence,

and not as anything better worth remembering

Still, it holds to him, as many things much better worth remembering never did. He has another mile or so, to linger out before the dinner-hour, and, when he walks over the bridge and by the river, the woman's words are in the rising wind, in the angry sky, in the troubled water, in the flickering lights. There is some solemn echo of them even in the Cathedral chime, which strikes a sudden surprise to his heart as he turns in under the archway of the gatehouse.

And so he goes up the postern stair

John Jasper passes a more agreeable and cheerful day than either of his guests Having no music-lessons to give in the holiday season, his time is his own, but for the Cathedral services He is early among the shopkeepers, ordering little table luxuries that his nephew likes nephew will not be with him long, he tells his provisiondealers, and so must be petted and made much of While out on his hospitable preparations, he looks in on Mr Sapsea, and mentions that dear Ned, and that inflammable young spark of Mr Crisparkle's, are to dine at the gatehouse to-day, and make up their difference Mr Sapsea is by no means friendly towards the inflammable young spark He says that his complexion is "Un-English" And when Mr Sapsea has once declared anything to be Un-English, he considers that thing everlastingly sunk in the bottomless pit

John Jasper is truly sorry to hear Mr Sapsea speak thus, for he knows right well that Mr, Sapsea never speaks

without a meaning, and that he has a subtle trick of being right Mr Sapsea (by a very remarkable coincidence) is

of exactly that opinion

Mr Jasper is in beautiful voice this day. In the pathetic supplication to have his heart inclined to keep this law, he quite astonishes his fellows by his melodious power. He has never sung difficult music with such skill and harmony, as in this day's Anthem. His nervous temperament is occasionally prone to take difficult music a little too quickly, to-day, his time is perfect.

These results are probably attained through a grand composure of the spirits. The mere mechanism of his throat is a little tender, for he wears, both with his singing-robe and with his ordinary dress, a large black scarf of strong close-woven silk, slung loosely round his neck. But his composure is so noticeable, that Mr Crisparkle

speaks of it as they come out from Vespers

"I must thank you, Jasper, for the pleasure with which I have heard you to-day Beautiful! Delightful! You could not have so outdone yourself, I hope, without being wonderfully well"

"I am wonderfully well"

"Nothing unequal," says the Minor Canon, with a smooth motion of his hand "nothing unsteady, nothing forced, nothing avoided, all thoroughly done in a masterly manner, with perfect self-command"

"Thank you I hope so, if it is not too much to say"

"One would think, Jasper, you had been trying a new medicine for that occasional indisposition of yours"

' No, really? That's well observed, for I have "

"Then stick to it, my good fellow," says Mr Crisparkle, clapping him on the shoulder with friendly encouragement, "stick to it"

"I will"

"I congratulate you," Mr Crisparkle pursues, as they

come out of the Cathedral, "on all accounts"

"Thank you again I will walk round to the Corner with you, if you don't object, I have plenty of time before my company come, and I want to say a word to you, which I think you will not be displeased to hear"

"What is it?"

"Well We were speaking, the other evening, of my black humours"

Mr Crisparkle's face falls, and he shakes his head

deploringly

"I said, you know, that I should make you an antidote to those black humours, and you said you hoped I would consign them to the flames"

"And I still hope so, Jasper"

"With the best reason in the world! I mean to burn this year's Diary at the year's end"

"Because you---->" Mr Crisparkle brightens greatly

as he thus begins

- "You anticipate me Because I feel that I have been out of sorts, gloomy, bilious, brain-oppressed, whatever it may be You said I had been exaggerative So I have "Mr Crisparkle's brightened face brightens still more
- "I couldn't see it then, because I was out of sorts, but I am in a healthier state now, and I acknowledge it with genuine pleasure I made a great deal of a very little, that's the fact."

"It does me good," cries Mr Crisparkle, "to hear you

say it!"

"A man leading a monotonous life," Jasper proceeds, "and getting his nerves, or his stomach, out of order, dwells upon an idea until it loses its proportions. That was my case with the idea in question. So I shall burn the evidence of my case, when the book is full, and begin the next volume with a clearer vision."

"This is better," says Mr Crisparkle, stopping at the steps of his own door to shake hands, "than I could have

hoped "

"Why, naturally," returns Jasper "You had but little reason to hope that I should become more like yourself You are always training yourself to be, mind and body, as clear as crystal, and you always are, and never change, whereas I am a muddy, solitary, moping weed However, I have got over that mope Shall I wait, while you ask if Mr Neville has left for my place? If not, he and I may walk round together"

"I think," said Mr Crisparkle, opening the entrance-door with his key, "that he left some time ago, at least I know he left, and I think he has not come back But I'll inquire. You won't come in?"

"My company wait," said Jasper, with a smile

The Minor Canon disappears, and in a few moments returns. As he thought, Mr. Neville has not come back, indeed, as he remembers now, Mr. Neville said he would probably go straight to the gatehouse

"Bad manners in a host!" says Jasper "My company will be there before me! What will you bet that I

don't find my company embracing?"

"I will bet—or I would, if ever I did bet," returns Mr Crisparkle, "that your company will have a gay entertainer this evening"

Jasper nods, and laughs good-night!

He retraces his steps to the Cathedral door, and turns down past it to the gatehouse. He sings, in a low voice and with delicate expression, as he walks along. It still seems as if a false note were not within his power to-night, and as if nothing could hurry or retard him. Arriving thus under the arched entrance of his dwelling, he pauses for an instant in the shelter to pull off that great black scarf, and hang it in a loop upon his arm. For that brief time, his face is knitted and stern. But it immediately clears, as he resumes his singing, and his way

And so he goes up the postern stair

The red light burns steadily all the evening in the lighthouse on the margin of the tide of busy life. Softened sounds and hum of traffic pass it and flow on irregularly into the lonely Precincts, but very little else goes by, save violent rushes of wind. It comes on to blow a boisterous gale

The Precincts are never particularly well lighted, but the strong blasts of wind blowing out many of the lamps (in some instances shattering the frames too, and bringing the glass rattling to the ground), they are unusually dark tonight. The darkness is augmented and confused, by flying dust from the earth, dry twigs from the trees, and great ragged fragments from the rooks' nests up in the tower

The trees themselves so toss and creak, as this tangible part of the darkness madly whirls about, that they seem in peril of being torn out of the earth while ever and again a crack, and a rushing fall, denote that some large branch has yielded to the storm

No such power of wind has blown for many a winter night. Chimneys topple in the streets, and people hold to posts and corners, and to one another, to keep themselves upon their feet. The violent rushes abate not, but increase in frequency and fury until at midnight, when the streets are empty, the storm goes thundering along them, rattling at all the latches, and tearing at all the shutters, as if warning the people to get up and fly with it, rather than have the roofs brought down upon their brains.

Still, the red light burns steadily Nothing is steady but

the red light

All through the night the wind blows, and abates not But early in the morning, when there is barely enough light in the east to dim the stars, it begins to lull From that time, with occasional wild charges, like a wounded monster dying, it drops and sinks, and at full daylight it is dead

It is then seen that the hands of the Cathedral clock are torn off, that lead from the roof has been stripped away, rolled up, and blown into the Close, and that some stones have been displaced upon the summit of the great tower Christmas morning though it be, it is necessary to send up workmen, to ascertain the extent of the damage done. These, led by Durdles, go aloft, while Mr Tope and a crowd of early idlers gather down in Minor Canon Corner, shading their eyes and watching for their appearance up there.

This cluster is suddenly broken and put aside by the hands of Mr Jasper, all the gazing eyes are brought down to the earth by his loudly inquiring of Mr Crisparkle, at

an open window -

"Where is my nephew?"

"He has not been here. Is he not with you?"

"No. He went down to the river last night, with Mr Neville, to look at the storm, and has not been back. Call Mr. Neville!"

"He left this morning, early "

"Left this morning early? Let me in! let me in!"

There is no more looking up at the tower, now All the assembled eyes are turned on Mr Jasper, white, half-dressed, panting, and clinging to the rail before the Minor Canon's house

CHAPTER XV

IMPEACHED

NEVILLE LANDLESS had started so early and walked at so good a pace, that when the church-bells began to ring at Cloisterham for morning service, he was eight miles away As he wanted his breakfast by that time, having set forth on a crust of bread, he stopped at the next roadside tavern to refresh

Visitors in want of breakfast—unless they were horses or cattle, for which class of guests there was preparation enough in the way of water-trough and hay—were so unusual at the sign of The Tilted Wagon, that it took a long time to get the wagon into the track of tea and toast and bacon. Neville in the interval, sitting in a sanded parlour, wondering in how long a time after he had gone, the sneezy fire of damp fagots would begin to make somebody else warm.

Indeed, The Tilted Wagon, as a cool establishment on the top of a hill, where the ground before the door was puddled with damp hoofs and trodden straw, where a scolding landlady slapped a moist baby (with one red sock on and one wanting), in the bar, where the cheese was cast aground upon a shelf, in company with a mouldy tablecloth and a green-handled knife, in a sort of cast-iron canoe, where the pale-faced bread shed tears of crumb over its shipwreck in another canoe, where the family linen, half washed and half dried, led a public life of lying about; where everything to drink was drunk out of mugs, and everything else was suggestive of a rhyme to mugs, The Tilted Wagon, all these things considered, hardly kept

its painted promise of providing good entertainment for Man and Beast However, Man, in the present case, was not critical, but took what entertainment he could get, and

went on again after a longer rest than he needed

He stopped at some quarter of a mile from the house, hesitating whether to pursue the road, or to follow a cart track between two high hedgerows, which led across the slope of a breezy heath, and evidently struck into the road again by-and-by. He decided in favour of this latter track, and pursued it with some toil, the rise being steep, and the way worn into deep ruts.

He was labouring along, when he became aware of some other pedestrians behind him. As they were coming up at a faster pace than his, he stood aside, against one of the high banks, to let them pass. But their manner was very curious. Only four of them passed. Other four slackened speed, and loitered as intending to follow him when he should go on. The remainder of the party (half-a-dozen perhaps) turned, and went back at a great rate.

He looked at the four behind him, and he looked at the four before him They all returned his look He resumed his way The four in advance went on, constantly looking

back, the four in the rear came closing up

When they all ranged out from the narrow track upon the open slope of the heath, and this order was maintained, let him diverge as he would to either side, there was no longer room to doubt that he was beset by these fellows He stopped, as a last test, and they all stopped

"Why do you attend upon me in this way?" he asked

the whole body "Are you a pack of thieves?"

"Don't answer him," said one of the number, he did not see which "Better be quiet"

"Better be quiet?" repeated Neville "Who said so?"

Nobody replied

"It's good advice, whichever of you skulkers gave it," he went on angrily "I will not submit to be penned in between four men there, and four men there I wish to pass, and I mean to pass, those four in front"

They were all standing still, himself included

"If eight men, or four men, or two men, set upon one,"

he proceeded, growing more enraged, "the one has no chance but to set his mark upon some of them And, by the Lord, I'll do it, if I am interrupted any farther!"

Shouldering his heavy stick, and quickening his pace, he shot on to pass the four ahead. The largest and strongest man of the number changed swiftly to the side on which he came up, and dexterously closed with him and went down with him, but not before the heavy stick had descended smartly

"Let him be!" said this man in a suppressed voice, as they struggled together on the grass "Fair play! His is the build of a girl to mine, and he's got a weight strapped to his back besides Let him alone I'll manage him"

After a little rolling about, in a close scuffle which caused the faces of both to be besmeared with blood, the man took his knee from Neville's chest, and rose, saying "There! Now take him arm-in-arm, any two of you!"

It was immediately done

"As to our being a pack of thieves, Mr Landless," said the man, as he spat out some blood, and wiped more from his face, "you know better than that at midday We wouldn't have touched you if you hadn't forced us We're going to take you round to the high road, anyhow, and you'll find help enough against thieves there, if you want it—Wipe his face somebody, see how it's a-trickling down him!"

When his face was cleansed, Neville recognized in the speaker, Joe, driver of the Cloisterham omnibus, whom he had seen but once, and that on the day of his arrival

"And what I recommend you for the present, is, don't talk, Mr Landless You'll find a friend waiting for you, at the high road—gone ahead by the other way when we split into two parties—and you had much better say nothing till you come up with him Bring that stick along, somebody else, and let's be moving!"

Utterly bewildered, Neville stared around him and said not a word Walking between his two conductors, who held his arms in theirs, he went on, as in a dream, until they came again into the high road, and into the midst of a little group of people The men who had turned back were among the group; and its central figures were Mr Jasper and Mr. Crisparkle Neville's conductors took him

up to the Minor Canon, and there released him, as an act

of deference to that gentleman

"What is all this, sir? What is the matter? I feel as if I had lost my senses!" cried Neville, the group closing in around him

"Where is my nephew?" asked Mr Jasper, wildly

"Where is your nephew?" repeated Neville "Why do you ask me?"

"I ask you," retorted Jasper, "because you were the last person in his company, and he is not to be found."

"Not to be found!" cried Neville, aghast

"Stay, stay," said Mr Crisparkle "Permit me, Jasper. Mr Neville, you are confounded, collect your thoughts, it is of great importance that you should collect your thoughts, attend to me"

"I will try, sir, but I seem mad"

"You left Mr Jasper last night with Edwin Drood?"

" Yes "

"At what hour?"

"Was it twelve o'clock?" asked Neville, with his hand

to his confused head, and appealing to Jasper

"Quite right," said Mr Crisparkle, "the hour Mr. Jasper has already named to me You went down to the river together?"

"Undoubtedly To see the action of the wind there"

"What followed? How long did you stay there?"
"About ten minutes, I should say not more We then

walked together to your house, and he took leave of me at the door"

"Did he say that he was going down to the river again?"

"No He said that he was going straight back"

The bystanders looked at one another, and at Mr Crisparkle. To whom Mr Jasper, who had been intensely watching Neville, said in a low, distinct, suspicious voice: "What are those stains upon his dress?"

All eyes were turned towards the blood upon his clothes.

"And here are the same stains upon this stick!" said Jasper, taking it from the hand of the man who held it. "I know the stick to be his, and he carried it last night. What does this mean?" "In the name of God, say what it means, Neville!"

urged Mr Crisparkle

"That man and I," said Neville, pointing out his late adversary, "had a struggle for the stick just now, and you may see the same marks on him, sir What was I to suppose, when I found myself molested by eight people? Could I dream of, the true reason when they would give me none at all?"

They admitted that they had thought it discreet to be silent, and that the struggle had taken place And yet the very men who had seen it looked darkly at the smears which the bright cold air had already dried

"We must return, Neville," said Mr Crisparkle, "of course you will be glad to come back to clear yourself?"

"Of course, sir "

"Mr Landless will walk at my side," the Minor Canon continued, looking around him "Come, Neville!"

They set forth on the walk back, and the others, with one exception, straggled after them at various distances Jasper walked on the other side of Neville, and never quitted that position. He was silent while Mr. Crisparkle more than once repeated his former questions, and while Neville repeated his former answers, also, while they both hazarded some explanatory conjectures. He was obstinately silent, because Mr. Crisparkle's manner directly appealed to him to take some part in the discussion, and no appeal would move his fixed face. When they drew near to the city, and it was suggested by the Minor Canon that they might do well in calling on the Mayor at once, he assented with a stern nod, but he spake no word until they stood in Mr. Sapsea's parlour

Mr Sapsea being informed by Mr Crisparkle of the circumstances under which they desired to make a voluntary statement before him, Mr Jasper broke silence by declaring that he placed his whole reliance, humanly speaking, on Mr Sapsea's penetration. There was no conceivable reason why his nephew should have suddenly absconded, unless Mr Sapsea could suggest one, and then he would defer. There was no intelligible likelihood of his having returned to the river and been accidentally

drowned in the dark, unless it should appear likely to Mr Sapsea, and then again he would defer. He washed his hands as clean as he could of all horrible suspicions, unless it should appear to Mr Sapsea that some such were inseparable from his last companion before his disappearance (not on good terms with previously), and then, once more, he would defer. His own state of mind, he being distracted with doubts, and labouring under dismal apprehensions, was not to be safely trusted, but Mr Sapsea's was

Mr Sapsea expressed his opinion that the case had a dark look, in short (and here his eyes rested full on Neville's countenance), an Un-English complexion Having made this grand point, he wandered into a denser haze and maze of nonsense than even a mayor might have been expected to disport himself in, and came out of it with the brilliant discovery that to take the life of a fellow-creature was to take something that didn't belong to you wavered whether or no he should at once issue his warrant for the committal of Neville Landless to jail, under circumstances of grave suspicion, and he might have gone so far as to do it but for the indignant protest of the Minor Canon who undertook for the young man's remaining in his own house, and being produced by his own hands, whenever demanded Mr Jasper then understood Mr Sapsea to suggest that the river should be dragged, that its banks should be rigidly examined, that particulars of the disappearance should be sent to all outlying places and to London, and that placards and advertisements should be widely circulated imploring Edwin Drood, if for any unknown reason he had withdrawn himself from his uncle's home and society, to take pity on that loving kinsman's sore bereavement and distress, and somehow inform him that he was yet alive Mr Sapsea was perfectly understood, for this was exactly his meaning (though he had said nothing about it), and measures were taken towards all these ends immediately

It would be difficult to determine which was the more oppressed with horror and amazement Neville Landless, or John Jasper But that Jasper's position forced him to be active, while Neville's forced him to be passive, there

would have been nothing to choose between them Each was bowed down and broken

With the earliest light of the next morning, men were at work upon the river, and other men-most of whom volunteered for the service-were examining the banks All the livelong day the search went on, upon the river. with barge and pole, and drag and net, upon the muddy and rushy shore, with jack-boots, hatchet, spade, rope, dogs, and all imaginable appliances Even at night, the river was speckled with lanterns, and lurid with fires. far-off creeks, into which the tide washed as it changed, had their knots of watchers, listening to the lapping of the stream, and looking out for any burden it might bear. remote shingly causeways near the sea, and lonely points off which there was a race of water, had their unwonted flaring cressets and rough-coated figures when the next day dawned, but no trace of Edwin Drood revisited the light of the sun

All that day, again, the search went on Now, in barge and boat, and now ashore among the osiers, or tramping amidst mud and stakes and jagged stones in low-lying places, where solitary watermarks and signals of strange shapes showed like spectres, John Jasper worked and toiled But to no purpose, for still no trace of Edwin

Drood revisited the light of the sun

Setting his watches for that night again, so that vigilant eyes should be kept on every change of tide, he went home exhausted Unkempt and disordered, bedaubed with mud that had dried upon him, and with much of his clothing torn to rags, he had but just dropped into his easy-chair, when Mr Grewgious stood before him

"This is strange news," said Mr Grewgious

"Strange and fearful news"

Jasper had merely lifted up his heavy eyes to say it, and now dropped them again as he drooped, worn out, over one side of his easy-chair

Mr Grewgious smoothed his head and face, and stood

looking at the fire

"How is your ward?" asked Jasper, after a time, in a faint, fatigued voice

"Poor little thing! You may imagine her condition"
"Have you seen his sister?" inquired Jasper, as before
"Whose?"

The curtness of the counter-question, and the cool slow manner in which, as he put it, Mr Grewgious moved his eyes from the fire to his companion's face, might at any other time have been exasperating. In his depression and exhaustion, Jasper merely opened his eyes to say. "The suspected young man's"

"Do you suspect him?" asked Mr Grewgious

"I don't know what to think I cannot make up my mind"

"Nor I," said Mr Grewgious "But as you spoke of him as the suspected young man, I thought you had made up your mind—I have just left Miss Landless"

"What is her state?"

"Defiance of all suspicion, and unbounded faith in her brother"

" Poor thing!"

"However," pursued Mr Grewgious, "it is not of her that I came to speak It is of my ward I have a communication to make that will surprise you At least, it has surprised me"

Jasper, with a groaning sigh, turned wearily in his

chair

"Shall I put it off till to-morrow?" said Mr Grewgious. "Mind, I warn you, that I think it will surprise you!"

More attention and concentration came into John Jasper's eyes as they caught sight of Mr Grewgious smoothing his head again, and again looking at the fire, but now, with a compressed and determined mouth

"What is it?" demanded Jasper, becoming upright in

hıs chaır

"To be sure," said Mr Grewgious, provokingly slowly and internally, as he kept his eyes on the fire "I might have known it sooner, she gave me the opening; but I am such an exceedingly Angular man, that it never occurred to me, I took all for granted"

"What is it?" demanded Jasper once more

Mr. Grewgious, alternately opening and shutting the

palms of his hands as he warmed them at the fire, and looking fixedly at him sideways, and never changing either his action or his look in all that followed, went on to reply

This young couple, the lost youth and Miss Rosa, my ward, though so long betrothed, and so long recognizing

their betrothal, and so near being married-"

Mr Grewgious saw a staring white face, and two quivering white lips, in the easy-chair, and saw two muddy hands gripping its sides. But for the hands, he might have thought he had never seen the face

"—This young couple came gradually to the discovery (made on both sides pretty equally, I think), that they would be happier and better, both in their present and their future lives, as affectionate friends, or say rather as brother and sister, than as husband and wife"

Mr Grewgious saw a lead-coloured face in the easychair, and on its surface dreadful starting drops or bubbles, as if of steel

"This young couple formed at length the healthy resolution of interchanging their discoveries, openly, sensibly, and tenderly They met for that purpose After some innocent and generous talk, they agreed to dissolve their existing, and their intended, relations, for ever and ever"

Mr Grewgious saw a ghastly figure rise, open-mouthed, from the easy-chair, and lift its outspread hands towards

its head

"One of this young couple, and that one your nephew, fearful, however, that in the tenderness of your affection for him you would be bitterly disappointed by so wide a departure from his projected life, forbore to tell you the secret, for a few days, and left it to be disclosed by me, when I should come down to speak to you, and he would be gone I speak to you, and he is gone"

Mr Grewgious saw the ghastly figure throw back its head, clutch its hair with its hands, and turn with a writh-

ing action from him

"I have now said all I have to say except that this young couple parted, firmly, though not without tears and sorrow, on the evening when you last saw them together"

Mr Grewgious heard a terrible shriek, and saw no ghastly figure, sitting or standing, saw nothing but a heap of torn and miry clothes upon the floor

Not changing his action even then, he opened and shut the palms of his hands as he warmed them and looked

down at 1t

CHAPTER XVI

DEVOTED

WHEN John Jasper recovered from his fit or swoon he found himself being tended by Mr and Mrs Tope, whom his visitor had summoned for the purpose His visitor, wooden of aspect, sat stiffly in a chair, with his hands upon his knees, watching his recovery

"There! You've come to nicely now, sir," said the tearful Mrs Tope, "you were thoroughly worn out, and no

wonder!"

"A man," said Mr Grewgious, with his usual air of repeating a lesson, "cannot have his rest broken, and his mind cruelly tormented, and his body overtaxed by fatigue, without being thoroughly worn out"

"I fear I have alarmed you?" Jasper apologized faintly,

when he was helped into his easy-chair

"Not at all, I thank you," answered Mr Grewgious

"You are too considerate"

"Not at all, I thank you," answered Grewgious again

"You must take some wine, sir," said Mrs Tope, "and the jelly that I had ready for you, and that you wouldn't put your lips to at noon, though I warned you what would come of it, you know, and you not breakfasted, and you must have a wing of the roast fowl that has been put back twenty times if it's been put back once—It shall all be on table in five minutes, and this good gentleman belike will stop and see you take it"

This good gentleman replied with a snort, which might mean yes, or no, or anything or nothing, and which Mrs Tope would have found highly mystifying, but that her

attention was divided by the service of the table

"You will take something with me?" said Jasper, as the cloth was laid

"I couldn't get a morsel down my throat, I thank you,"

answered Mr Grewgious

Jasper both ate and drank almost voraciously Combined with the hurry in his mode of doing it, was an evident indifference to the taste of what he took, suggesting that he ate and drank to fortify himself against any other failure of the spirits, far more than to gratify his palate. Mr Grewgious in the meantime sat upright, with no expression in his face, and a hard kind of imperturbably polite protest all over him as though he would have said, in reply to some invitation to discourse "I couldn't originate the faintest approach to an observation on any subject whatever, I thank you"

"Do you know," said Jasper, when he had pushed away his plate and glass, and had sat meditating for a few minutes "do you know that I find some crumbs of comfort in the communication with which you have so much amazed

me?"

"Do you?" returned Mr Grewgious, pretty plainly adding the unspoken clause "I don't, I thank you!"
"After recovering from the shock of a piece of news of

"After recovering from the shock of a piece of news of my dear boy, so entirely unexpected, and so destructive of all the castles I had built for him, and after having had time to think of it, yes"

"I shall be glad to pick up your crumbs," said Mr

Grewgious, drily

"Is there not, or is there—if I deceive myself, tell me so, and shorten my pain—is there not, or is there, hope that, finding himself in this new position, and becoming sensitively alive to the awkward burden of explanation, in this quarter, and that, and the other, with which it would load him, he avoided the awkwardness, and took to flight?"

"Such a thing might be," said Mr Grewgious, ponder-

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"Such a thing has been. I have read of cases in which people, rather than face a seven days' wonder, and have to account for themselves to the idle and impertment, have taken themselves away, and been long unheard of"

"I believe such things have happened," said Mr Grew-

gious, pondering still

"When I had, and could have, no suspicion," pursued Jasper, eagerly following the new track, "that the dear lost boy had withheld anything from me—most of all, such a leading matter as this—what gleam of light was there for me in the whole black sky? When I supposed that his intended wife was here, and his marriage close at hand, how could I entertain the possibility of his voluntarily leaving this place, in a manner that would be so unaccountable, capricious, and cruel? But now that I know what you have told me, is there no little chink through which day pierces? Supposing him to have disappeared of his own act, is not his disappearance more accountable and less cruel? The fact of his having just parted from your ward, is in itself a sort of reason for his going away. It does not make his mysterious departure the less cruel to me, it is true, but it relieves it of cruelty to her."

Mr Grewgious could not but assent to this

"And even as to me," continued Jasper, still pursuing the new track, with ardour, and, as he did so, brightening with hope "he knew that you were coming to me, he knew that you were intrusted to tell me what you have told me if your doing so has awakened a new train of thought in my perplexed mind, it reasonably follows that, from the same premises, he might have foreseen the inferences that I should draw Grant that he did foresee them, and even the cruelty to me—and who am I!—John Jasper, Music Master, vanishes!"—

Once more, Mr Grewgious could not but assent to

"I have had my distrusts, and terrible distrusts they have been," said Jasper, "but your disclosure, overpowering as it was at first—showing me that my own dear boy had had a great disappointing reservation from me, who so fondly loved him, kindles hope within me You do not extinguish it when I state it, but admit it to be a reasonable hope I begin to believe it possible "here he clasped his hands. "that he may have disappeared

from among us of his own accord, and that he may yet be alive and well "

Mr Crisparkle came in at the moment To whom Mr

Tasper repeated —

"I begin to believe it possible that he may have disappeared of his own accord, and may yet be alive and well"

Mr Crisparkle, taking a seat, and inquiring "Why so?" Mr Jasper repeated the arguments he had just set forth. If they had been less plausible than they were, the good Minor Canon's mind would have been in a state of preparation to receive them, as exculpatory of his unfortunate pupil. But he, too, did really attach great importance to the lost young man's having been, so immediately before his disappearance, placed in a new and embarrassing relation towards every one acquainted with his projects and affairs, and the fact seemed to him to present the question in a new light

"I stated to Mr Sapsea, when we waited on him," said Jasper as he really had done "that there was no quarrel or difference between the two young men at their last meeting We all know that their first meeting was unfortunately very far from amicable, but all went smoothly and quietly when they were last together at my house My dear boy was not in his usual spirits, he was depressed—I noticed that—and I am bound henceforth to dwell upon the circumstance the more, now that I know there was a special reason for his being depressed a reason, moreover, which may possibly have induced him to

absent himself"

"I pray to Heaven it may turn out so!" exclaimed Mr Crisparkle

"I pray to Heaven it may turn out so!" repeated Jasper "You know—and Mr Grewgious should now know likewise—that I took a great prepossession against Mr Neville Landless, arising out of his furious conduct on that first occasion You know that I came to you, extremely apprehensive, on my dear boy's behalf, of his mad violence You know that I even entered in my Diary, and showed the entry to you, that I had dark forebodings against him Mr Grewgious ought to be

possessed of the whole case He shall not, through any suppression of mine, be informed of a part of it and kept in ignorance of another part of it. I wish him to be good enough to understand that the communication he has made to me has hopefully influenced my mind, in spite of its having been, before this mysterious occurrence took place, profoundly impressed against young Landless."

This fairness troubled the Minor Canon much felt that he was not as open in his own dealing charged against himself reproachfully that he had suppressed, so far, the two points of a second strong outbreak of temper against Edwin Drood on the part of Neville, and of the passion of jealousy having, to his own certain knowledge, flamed up in Neville's breast against him convinced of Neville's innocence of any part in the ugly disappearance, and yet so many little circumstances combined so wofully against him, that he dreaded to add two more to their cumulative weight. He was among the truest of men, but he had been balancing in his mind, much to its distress, whether his volunteering to tell these two fragments of truth, at this time, would not be tantamount to a piecing together of falsehood in the place of truth

However, here was a model before him He hesitated no longer Addressing Mr Grewgious, as one placed in authority by the revelation he had brought to bear on the mystery (and surpassingly Angular Mr Grewgious became when he found himself in that unexpected position), Mr Crisparkle bore his testimony to Mr Jasper's strict sense of justice, and, expressing his absolute confidence in the complete clearance of his pupil from the least taint of suspicion, sooner or later, avowed that his confidence in that young gentleman had been formed, in spite of his confidential knowledge that his temper was of the hottest and fiercest, and that it was directly incensed against Mr Jasper's nephew, by the circumstance of his romantically supposing himself to be enamoured of the same young lady The sanguine reaction manifest in Mr Jasper was proof even against this unlooked-for declaration turned him paler, but he repeated that he would cling to

the hope he had derived from Mr Grewgious, and that if no trace of his dear boy were found, leading to the dreadful inference that he had been made away with, he would cherish until the last stretch of possibility the idea that he might have absconded of his own wild will

Now, it fell out that Mr Crisparkle, going away from this conference still very uneasy in his mind, and very much troubled on behalf of the young man whom he held as a kind of prisoner in his own house, took a memorable night walk

He walked to Cloisterham Weir

He often did so, and consequently there was nothing remarkable in his footsteps tending that way But the preoccupation of his mind so hindered him from planning any walk, or taking heed of the objects he passed, that his first consciousness of being near the Weir, was derived from the sound of the falling water close at hand

"How did I come here!" was his first thought, as he

stopped.

"Why did I come here!" was his second

Then, he stood intently listening to the water A familiar passage in his reading, about airy tongues that syllable men's names, rose so unbidden to his ear, that he put it

from him with his hand, as if it were tangible

It was starlight. The Weir was full two miles above the spot to which the young men had repaired to watch the storm. No search had been made up here, for the tide had been running strongly down, at that time of the night of Christmas Eve, and the likeliest places for the discovery of a body, if a fatal accident had happened under such circumstances, all lay-both when the tide ebbed, and when it flowed again-between that spot and the sea. The water came over the Weir, with its usual sound on a cold starlight night, and little could be seen of it, yet Mr Crispatkle had a strange idea that something unusual hung about the place.

He reasoned with himself. What was it? Where was it? Put it to the proof Which sense did it address?

No sense reported anything unusual there. He listened again, and his sense of hearing again checked the water coming over the Weir, with its usual sound on a cold star-

light night

Knowing very well that the mystery with which his mind was occupied, might of itself give the place this haunted air, he strained those hawk's eyes of his for the correction of his sight. He got closer to the Weir, and peered at its well-known posts and timbers. Nothing in the least unusual was remotely shadowed forth. But he resolved that he would come back early in the morning.

The Weir ran through his broken sleep, all night, and he was back again at sunrise. It was a brief frosty morning. The whole composition before him, when he stood where he had stood last night, was clearly discernible in its minutest details. He had surveyed it closely for some minutes, and was about to withdraw his eyes, when they

were attracted keenly to one spot

He turned his back upon the Weir and looked far away at the sky, and at the earth, and then looked again at that one spot It caught his sight again immediately, and he concentrated his vision upon it. He could not lose it now, though it was but such a speck in the landscape. It fascinated his sight. His hands began plucking off his coat. For it struck him that at that spot—a corner of the Weir—something glistened, which did not move and come over with the glistening water-drops, but remained stationary.

He assured himself of this, he threw off his clothes, he plunged into the icy water, and swam for the spot Climbing the timbers, he took from them, caught among their interstices by its chain, a gold watch, bearing engraved

upon its back E D

He brought the watch to the bank, swam to the Weir again, climbed it, and dived off He knew every hole and corner of all the depths, and dived and dived and dived, until he could bear the cold no more His notion was, that he would find the body, he only found a shirt-pin sticking in some mud and ooze

With these discoveries he returned to Cloisterham, and, taking Neville Landless with him, went straight to the Mayor. Mr Jasper was sent for, the watch and shirt-pin

were identified, Neville was detained, and the wildest frenzy and fatuity of evil report rose against him He was of that vindictive and violent nature, that but for his poor sister, who alone had influence over him, and out of whose sight he was never to be trusted, he would be in the daily commission of murder Before coming to England he had caused to be whipped to death sundry "Natives"-nomadic persons, encamping now in Asia, now in Africa, now in the West Indies, and now at the North Pole-vaguely supposed in Cloisterham to be always black, always of great virtue, always calling themselves Me, and everybody else Massa or Missie (according to sex), and always reading tracts of the obscurest meaning, in broken English, but always accurately understanding them in the purest mother tongue He had nearly brought Mrs Crisparkle's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave (Those original expressions were Mr Sapsea's) He had repeatedly said he would have Mr Crisparkle's life He had repeatedly said he would have everybody's life, and become in effect the last man He had been brought down to Cloisterham, from London, by an eminent Philanthropist, and why? Because that Philanthropist had expressly declared "I owe it to my fellow-creatures that he should be, in the words of BEN-THAM, where he is the cause of the greatest danger to the smallest number "

These dropping shots from the blunderbusses of blunderheadedness might not have hit him in a vital place. But he had to stand against a trained and well-directed fire of arms of precision too. He had notoriously threatened the lost young man, and had, according to the showing of his own faithful friend and tutor who strove so hard for him, a cause of bitter animosity (created by himself, and stated by himself hagainst that ill-starred fellow. He had armed himself with an offensive weapon for the fatal night, and he had gone off early in the morning, after making preparations for departure. He had been found with traces of blood on him, truly, they might have been wholly caused as he represented, but they might not, also. On a search-warrant being issued for the examination of his room, clothes, and so forth, it was discovered that he had

destroyed all his papers, and rearranged all his possessions, on the very afternoon of the disappearance The watch found at the Weir was challenged by the jeweller as one he had wound and set for Edwin Drood, at twenty minutes past two on that same afternoon, and it had run down, before being cast into the water, and it was the neweller's positive opinion that it had never been re-wound This would justify the hypothesis that the watch was taken from him not long after he left Mr Jasper's house at midnight, in company with the last person seen with him, and that it had been thrown away after being retained some Why thrown away? If he had been murdered, and so artfully disfigured, or concealed, or both, as that the murderer hoped identification to be impossible, except from something that he wore, assuredly the murderer would seek to remove from the body the most lasting, the best known, and the most easily recognizable, things upon Those things would be the watch and shirt-pin to his opportunities of casting them into the river, if he were the object of these suspicions, they were easy he had been seen by many persons, wandering about on that side of the city—indeed on all sides of it—in a miserable and seemingly half-distracted manner As to the choice of the spot, obviously such criminating evidence had better take its chance of being found anywhere, rather than upon himself, or in his possession Concerning the reconciliatory nature of the appointed meeting between the two young men, very little could be made of that in young Landless's favour, for it distinctly appeared that the meeting originated, not with him, but with Mr Crisparkle, and that it had been urged on by Mr Crisparkle, and who could say how unwillingly, or in what ill-conditioned mood, his enforced pupil had gone to it? The more his case was looked into, the weaker it became in every point Even the broad suggestion that the lost young man had absconded, was rendered additionally improbable on the showing of the young lady from whom he had so lately parted, for, what did she say, with great earnestness and sorrow, when interrogated? That he had, expressly and enthusiastically, planned with her, that he would await the arrival of her guardian, Mr Grewgious And yet, be it observed, he disappeared

before that gentleman appeared

On the suspicions thus urged and supported, Neville was detained, and re-detained, and the search was pressed on every hand, and Jasper laboured night and day. But nothing more was found. No discovery being made, which proved the lost man to be dead, it at length became necessary to release the person suspected of having made away with him. Neville was set at large. Then, a consequence ensued which Mr. Crisparkle had too well foreseen. Neville must leave the place, for the place shunned him and cast him out. Even had it not been so, the dear old china shepherdess would have worried herself to death with fears for her son, and with general trepidation occasioned by their having such an inmate. Even had that not been so, the authority to which the Minor Canon deferred officially, would have settled the point.

"Mr Crisparkle," quoth the Dean, "human justice may err, but it must act according to its lights The days of taking sanctuary are past This young man must not take

sanctuary with us "

"You mean that he must leave my house, sir?"

"Mr Crisparkle," returned the prudent Dean, "I claim no authority in your house I merely confer with you, on the painful necessity you find yourself under, of depriving this young man of the great advantages of your counsel and instruction"

"It is very lamentable, sir," Mr Crisparkle represented.

"Very much so," the Dean assented

"And if it be a necessity——" Mr Crisparkle faltered "As you unfortunately find it to be "returned the Dean

"As you unfortunately find it to be," returned the Dean Mr Crisparkle bowed submissively. "It is hard to pre-

judge his case, sir, but I am sensible that---"

"Just so Perfectly. As you say, Mr Crisparkle," interposed the Dean, nodding his head smoothly, "there is nothing else to be done. No doubt, no doubt. There is no alternative, as your good sense has discovered."

"I am entirely satisfied of his perfect innocence, sir,

nevertheless."

"We-e-ell!" said the Dean, in a more confidential tone, and slightly glancing around him, "I would not say so, generally Not generally Enough of suspicion attaches to him to—no, I think I would not say so, generally."

Mr Crisparkle bowed again

"It does not become us, perhaps," pursued the Dean, "to be partisans Not partisans We clergy keep our hearts warm and our heads cool, and we hold a judicious middle course"

"I hope you do not object, sir, to my having stated in public, emphatically, that he will reappear here, whenever any new suspicion may be awakened, or any new circumstance may come to light in this extraordinary matter?"

"Not at all," returned the Dean "And yet, do you know, I don't think," with a very nice and neat emphasis on those two words "I don't think I would state it, emphatically State it? Ye-e-es! But emphatically? No-o-o I think not In point of fact, Mr Crisparkle, keeping our hearts warm and our heads cool, we clergy need do nothing emphatically"

So Minor Canon Row knew Neville Landless no more, and he went whithersoever he would, or could, with a

blight upon his name and fame

It was not until then that John Jasper silently resumed his place in the choir Haggard and red-eyed, his hopes plainly had deserted him, his sanguine mood was gone, and all his worst misgivings had come back A day or two afterwards, while unrobing, he took his Diary from a pocket of his coat, turned the leaves, and with an impressive look, and without one spoken word, handed this entry to Mr Crisparkle to read—

"My dear boy is murdered. The discovery of the watch and shirt-pin convinces me that he was murdered that night, and that his jewellery was taken from him to prevent identification by its means. All the delusive hopes I had founded on his separation from his betrothed wife, I give to the winds. They perish before this fatal discovery. I now swear, and record the oath on this page, That I nevermore will discuss this mystery with any human

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creature until I hold the clue to it in my hand never will relax in my secrecy or in my search will fasten the crime of the murder of my dear dead boy upon the murderer And, That I devote myself to his destruction "

· CHAPTER XVII

PHILANTHROPY, PROFESSIONAL AND UNPROFESSIONAL

FULL half a year had come and gone, and Mr Crisparkle sat in a waiting-room in the London chief offices of the Haven of Philanthropy, until he could have audience of Mr Honeythunder

In his college days of athletic exercises, Mr Crisparkle had known professors of the Noble Art of fisticuffs, and had attended two or three of their gloved gatherings had now an opportunity of observing that as to the phreno-logical formation of the backs of their heads, the Professing Philanthropists were uncommonly like the Pugilists the development of all those organs which constitute, or attend, a propensity to "pitch into" your fellow-creatures, the Philanthropists were remarkably favoured There were several Professors passing in and out, with exactly the aggressive air upon them of being ready for a turn-up with any Novice who might happen to be on hand, that Mr Crisparkle well remembered in the circles of the Fancy Preparations were in progress for a moral little Mill somewhere on the rural circuit, and other Professors were backing this or that Heavy-weight as good for such or such speech-making hits, so very much after the manner of the sporting publicans, that the intended Resolutions might have been Rounds In an official manager of these displays much celebrated for his platform tactics, Mr Crisparkle recognized (in a suit of black) the counterpart of a deceased benefactor of his species, an eminent public character, once known to fame as Frosty-faced Fogo, who in days of yore superintended the formation of the magic circle with the ropes and stakes There were only three conditions of resemblance wanting between

these Professors and those Firstly, the Philanthropists were in very bad training much too fleshy, and presenting, both in face and figure, a superabundance of what is known to Pugilistic Experts as Suet Pudding Secondly, the Philanthropists had not the good temper of the Pugilists, and used worse language Thirdly, their fighting code stood in great need of revision, as ampowering them not only to bore their man to the ropes, but to bore him to the confines of distraction, also to hit him when he was down, hit him anywhere and anyhow, kick him, stamp upon him, gouge him, and maul him behind his back without mercy In these last particulars the Professors of Philanthropy

Mr Crisparkle was so completely lost in musing on these similarities and dissimilarities, at the same time watching the crowd which came and went by, always, as it seemed, on errands of antagonistically snatching something from somebody, and never giving anything to anybody, that his name was called before he heard it. On his at length responding, he was shown by a miserably shabby and underpaid stipendiary Philanthropist (who could hardly have done worse if he had taken service with a declared enemy of the human race) to Mr Honeythun-

der's room

"Sır," said Mr Honeythunder, in his tremendous voice, like a schoolmaster issuing orders to a boy of whom he had a bad opinion, "sit down"

Mr Crisparkle seated himself

Mr Honeythunder having signed the remaining few score of a few thousand circulars, calling upon a corresponding number of families without means to come forward, stump up instantly, and be Philanthropists, or go to the Devil, another shabby stipendiary Philanthropist (highly disinterested, if in earnest) gathered these into a basket and walked off with them

"Now, Mr Crisparkle," said Mr Honeythunder, turning his chair half round towards him when they were alone, and squaring his arms with his hands on his knees, and his brows knitted, as if he added, I am going to make

short work of you "Now, Mr Crisparkle, we entertain different views, you and I, sir, of the sanctity of human life"

"Do we?" returned the Minor Canon

"We do, sir"

"Might I ask you," said the Minor Canon "what are your views on that subject?"

"That human life is a thing to be held sacred, sir"

"Might I ask you," pursued the Minor Canon as before "what you suppose to be my views on that subject?"

"By George, sir!" returned the Philanthropist, squaring his arms still more, as he frowned on Mr Crisparkle

"they are best known to yourself"

"Readily admitted But you began by saying that we took different views, you know Therefore (or you could not say so) you must have set up some views as mine

Pray, what views have you set up as mine?"

"Here is a man—and a young man," said Mr Honeythunder, as if that made the matter infinitely worse, and he could have easily borne the loss of an old one, "swept off the face of the earth by a deed of violence What do you call that?"

"Murder," said the Minor Canon

"What do you call the doer of that deed, sir?"

"A murderer," said the Minor Canon

"I am glad to hear you admit so much, sir," retorted Mr Honeythunder, in his most offensive manner "and I candidly tell you that I didn't expect it" Here he lowered heavily at Mr Crisparkle again

"Be so good as to explain what you mean by those very

unjustifiable expressions "

"I don't sit here, sir," returned the Philanthropist, rais-

ing his voice to a roar, "to be browbeaten"

"As the only other person present, no one can possibly know that better than I do," returned the Minor Canon very quietly "But I interrupt your explanation"

"Murder!" proceeded Mr Honeythunder, in a kind of boisterous reverie, with his platform folding of his arms, and his platform nod of abhorrent reflection after each short sentiment of a word "Bloodshed! Abel! Cain! I hold no terms with Cain I repudiate with a shudder the red hand when it is offered me"

Instead of instantly leaping into his chair and cheering himself hoarse, as the Brotherhood in public meeting assembled would infallibly have done on this cue, Mr Crisparkle merely reversed the quiet crossing of his legs, and said mildly "Don't let me interrupt your explanation—when you begin it"

"The Commandments say, no murder NO murder, sir!" proceeded Mr Honeythunder, platformally pausing as if he took Mr Crisparkle to task for having distinctly asserted that they said You may do a little murder, and

then leave off

"And they also say, you shall bear no false witness,"

observed Mr Crisparkle

"Enough!" bellowed Mr Honeythunder, with a solemnity and severity that would have brought the house down at a meeting, "E—e—nough! My late wards being now of age, and I being released from a trust which I cannot contemplate without a thrill of horror, there are the accounts which you have undertaken to accept on their behalf, and there is a statement of the balance which you have undertaken to receive, and which you cannot receive too soon. And let me tell you, sir, I wish that, as a man and a Minor Canon, you were better employed," with a nother nod. "Bett—ter em—ployed!" with another and the three nods added up

Mr Crisparkle rose, a little heated in the face, but with

perfect command of himself

"Mr Honeythunder," he said, taking up the papers referred to "my being better or worse employed than I am at present is a matter of taste and opinion. You might think me better employed in enrolling myself a member of your Society."

"Ay, indeed, sir!" retorted Mr Honeythunder, shaking his head in a threatening manner "It would have been

better for you if you had done that long ago!"

"I think otherwise"

"Or," said Mr Honeythunder, shaking his head again,

"I might think one of your profession better employed in devoting himself to the discovery and punishment of guilt than in leaving that duty to be undertaken by a layman"

"I may regard my profession from a point of view which teaches me that its first duty is towards those who are in necessity and tribulation, who are desolate and oppressed," said Mr Crisparkle "However, as I have quite clearly satisfied myself that it is no part of my profession to make professions, I say no more of that But I owe it to Mr Neville, and to Mr Neville's sister (and in a much lower degree to myself), to say to you that I know I was in the full possession and understanding of Mr Neville's mind and heart at the time of this occurrence. and that, without in the least colouring or concealing what was to be deplored in him and required to be corrected, I feel certain that his tale is true Feeling that certainty, I befriend him. As long as that certainty shall last, I will befriend him And if any consideration could shake me in this resolve, I should be so ashamed of myself for my meanness, that no man's good opinion-no, nor no woman's —so gained, could compensate me for the loss of my

Good fellow! manly fellow! And he was so modest, too There was no more self-assertion in the Minor Canon than in the schoolboy who had stood in the breezy playing-fields keeping a wicket. He was simply and staunchly true to his duty alike in the large case and in the small. So all true souls ever are. So every true soul ever was, ever is, and ever will be. There is nothing little to the really great in spirit.

"Then who do you make out did the deed?" asked Mr

Honeythunder, turning on him abruptly

"Heaven forbid," said Mr Crisparkle, "that in my desire to clear one man I should lightly criminate another! I accuse no one"

"Tcha!" ejaculated Mr Honeythunder, with great disgust, for this was by no means the principle on which the Philanthropic Brotherhood usually proceeded "And, sir, you are not a disinterested witness, we must bear in mind"

How am I an interested one?" inquired Mr Crisparkle,

smiling innocently, at a loss to imagine

"There was a certain stipend, sir, paid to you for your pupil, which may have warped your judgment a bit," said Mr Honeythunder, coarsely

"Perhaps I expect to retain it still?" Mr Crisparkle

returned, enlightened, "do you mean that too?"

"Well, sir," returned the professional Philanthropist, getting up and thrusting his hands down into his trousers pockets, "I don't go about measuring people for caps If people find I have any about me that fit 'em, they can put 'em on and wear 'em, if they like That's their lookout, not mine"

Mr Crisparkle eyed him with a just indignation, and took him to task thus. —

"Mr Honeythunder, I hoped when I came in here that I might be under no-necessity of commenting on the introduction of platform manners or platform manœuvres among the decent forbearances of private life But you have given me such a specimen of-both, that I should be a fit subject for both if I remained silent respecting them They are detestable"

"They don't suit you, I dare say, sir"

"They are," repeated Mr Crisparkle, without noticing the interruption, "detestable They violate equally the justice that should belong to Christians, and the restraints that should belong to gentlemen You assume a great crime to have been committed by one whom I, acquainted with the attendant circumstances, and having numerous reasons on my side, devoutly believe to be innocent of it Because I differ from you on that vital point, what is your platform resource? Instantly to turn upon me, charging that I have no sense of the enormity of the crime itself, but am its aider and abettor! So, another time-taking me as representing your opponent in other cases—you set up a platform credulity, a moved and seconded and carried-unanimously profession of faith in some ridiculous delusion or mischievous imposition I decline to believe it, and you fall back upon your platform resource of proclaiming that I believe nothing, that because I will not bow

down to a false God of your making, I deny the true God! Another time you make the platform discovery that War is a calamity, and you propose to abolish it by a string of twisted resolutions tossed into the air like the tail of a kite I do not admit the discovery to be yours in the least, and I have not a grain of faith in your remedy Again. your platform esource of representing me as revelling in the horrors of a battle-field like a fiend incarnate! Another time, in another of your undiscriminating platform rushes. you would punish the sober for the drunken I claim consideration for the comfort, convenience, and refreshment of the sober, and you presently make platform proclamation that I have a depraved desire to turn Heaven's creatures into swine and wild beasts! In all such cases your movers, and your seconders, and your supporters-your regular Professors of all degrees, run amuck like so many mad Malays, habitually attributing the lowest and basest motives with the utmost recklessness (let me call your attention to a recent instance in yourself for which you should blush), and quoting figures which you know to be as wilfully one-sided as a statement of any complicated account that should be all Creditor side and no Debtor, or all Debtor side and no Creditor Therefore it is, Mr Honeythunder, that I consider the platform a sufficiently bad example and a sufficiently bad school, even in public life, but hold that, carried into private life, it becomes an unendurable nuisance"

"These are strong words, sir,!" exclaimed the Philan-

thropist

"I hope so," said Mr Crisparkle 'Good-morning"

He walked out of the Haven at a great rate, but soon fell into his regular brisk pace, and soon had a smile upon his face as he went along, wondering what the china shepherdess would have said if she had seen him pounding Mr Honeythunder in the late little lively affair For Mr Crisparkle had just enough of harmless vanity to hope that he had hit hard, and to glow with the belief that he had trimmed the Philanthropic jacket pretty handsomely

He took himself to Staple Inn, but not to P J T. and Mr Grewgious Full many a creaking stair he climbed before he reached some attic rooms in a corner, turned the latch of their unbolted door, and stood beside the table of Neville Landless

An air of retreat and solitude hung about the rooms and about their inhabitant. He was much worn, and so were they. Their sloping ceilings, cumbrous rusty locks and grates, and heavy wooden bins and beams, slowly mouldering withal, had a prisonous look, and he had the haggard face of a prisoner. Yet the sunlight shone in at the ugly garret-window, which had a penthouse to itself thrust out among the tiles, and on the cracked and smoke-blackened parapet beyond, some of the deluded sparrows of the place rheumatically hopped, like little feathered cripples who had left their crutches in their nests, and there was a play of living leaves at hand that changed the air, and made an imperfect sort of music in it that would have been melody in the country

The rooms were sparely furnished, but with good store of books Everything expressed the abode of a poor student That Mr Crisparkle had been either chooser, lender, or donor of the books, or that he combined the three characters, might have been easily seen in the

friendly beam of his eyes upon them as he entered

"How goes it, Neville?"

"I am in good heart, Mr Crisparkle, and working away"

"I wish your eyes were not quite so large and not quite so bright," said the Minor Canon, slowly releasing the hand he had taken in his

"They brighten at the sight of you," returned Neville "If you were to fall away from me, they would soon be dull enough"

"Rally, rally!" urged the other, in a stimulating tone

"Fight for it, Neville!"

"If I were dying, I feel as if a word from you would rally me, if my pulse had stopped, I feel as if your touch would make it beat again," said Neville "But I have rallied, and am doing famously"

Mr Crisparkle turned him with his face a little more

towards the light

"I want to see a ruddier touch here, Neville," he said, indicating his own healthy cheek by way of pattern "I

want more sun to shine upon you"

Neville drooped suddenly, as he replied in a lowered voice "I am not hardy enough for that, yet I may become so, but I cannot bear it yet If you had gone through those Cloisterham streets as I did, if you had seen, as I did, those averted eyes, and the better sort of people silently giving me too much room to pass, that I might not touch them or come near them, you wouldn't think it quite unreasonable that I cannot go about in the daylight"

"My poor fellow!" said the Minor Canon, in a tone so purely sympathetic that the young man caught his hand, "I never said it was unreasonable, never thought so

But I should like you to do it"

"And that would give me the strongest motive to do it But I cannot yet I cannot persuade myself that the eyes of even the stream of strangers I pass in this vast city look at me without suspicion I feel marked and tainted, even when I go out—as I do only—at night But the darkness covers me then, and I take courage from it"

Mr Crisparkle laid a hand upon his shoulder, and stood

looking down at him

"If I could have changed my name," said Neville, "I would have done so But as you wisely pointed out to me, I can't do that, for it would look like guilt. If I could have gone to some distant place, I might have found relief in that, but the thing is not to be thought of, for the same reason. Hiding and escaping would be the construction in either case. It seems a little hard to be so tied to a stake, and innocent, but I don't complain."

"And you must expect no miracle to help you, Neville,"

said Mr Crisparkle, compassionately

"No, sir, I know that The ordinary fulness of time and circumstances is all I have to trust to"

"It will right you at last, Neville"

"So I believe, and I hope I may live to know it"

But perceiving that the despondent mood into which he was falling cast a shadow on the Minor Canon, and (it may be) feeling that the broad hand upon his shoulder was not then quite as steady as its own natural strength had rendered it when it first touched him just now, he

brightened and said -

Excellent circumstances for study, anyhow! and you know, Mr Crisparkle, what need I have of study in all ways Not to mention that you have advised me to study for the difficult profession of the law, specially, and that of course I am guiding myself by the advice of such a friend and helper Such a good friend and helper!"

He took the fortifying hand from his shoulder, and kissed it Mr Crisparkle beamed at the books, but not so

brightly as when he had entered

"I gather from your silence on the subject that my late

guardian is adverse, Mr Crisparkle?"

The Minor Canon answered "Your late guardian is a —a most unreasonable person, and it signifies nothing to any reasonable person whether he is adverse, or perverse, or reverse"

"Well for me that I have enough with economy to live upon," sighed Neville, half wearily and half cheerily, "while I wait to be learned, and wait to be righted! Else I might have proved the proverb, that while the grass

grows the steed starves!"

He opened some books as he said it, and was soon immersed in their interleaved and annotated passages, while Mr Crisparkle sat beside him, expounding, correcting, and advising. The Minor Canon's Cathedral duties made these visits of his difficult to accomplish, and only to be compassed at intervals of many weeks. But they were as serviceable as they were precious to Neville Landless.

When they had got through such studies as they had in hand, they stood leaning on the window-sill, and looking down upon the patch of garden "Next week," said Mr Crisparkle, "you will cease to be alone, and will have a devoted companion"

"And yet," returned Neville, "this seems an uncon-

genial place to bring my sister to"

"I don't think so," said the Minor Canon "There is

duty to be done here, and there are womanly feeling, sense, and courage wanted here "

"I meant," explained Neville, "that the surroundings are so dull and unwomanly, and that Helena can have no

suitable friend or society here "

"You have only to remember," said Mr Crisparkle, "that you are here yourself, and that she has to draw you into the sunlight"

They were silent for a little while, and then Mr Cri-

sparkle began anew

"When we first spoke together, Neville, you told me that your sister had risen out of the disadvantages of your past lives as superior to you as the tower of Cloisterham Cathedral is higher than the chimneys of Minor Canon Corner Do you remember that?"

"Right well!"

"I was inclined to think it at the time an enthusiastic flight. No matter what I think it now. What I would emphasize is, that under the head of Pride your sister is a great and opportune example to you."

"Under all heads that are included in the composition

of a fine character, she is "

"Say so, but take this one Your sister has learnt how to govern what is proud in her nature. She can dominate it even when it is wounded through her sympathy with you. No doubt she has suffered deeply in those same streets where you suffered deeply. No doubt her life is darkened by the cloud that darkens yours. But bending her pride into a grand composure that is not haughty or aggressive, but is a sustained confidence in you and in the truth, she has won her way through those streets until she passes along them as high in the general respect as any one who treads them. Every day and hour of her life since Edwin Drood's disappearance, she has faced malignity and folly—for you—as only a brave nature well directed can. So it will be with her to the end. Another and weaker kind of pride might sink broken-hearted, but never such a pride as hers which knows no shrinking, and can get no mastery over her."

The pale cheek beside him flushed under the compari-

son, and the hint implied in it

"I will do all I can to imitate her," said Neville

"Do so, and be a truly brave man, as she is a truly brave woman," answered Mr Crisparkle, stoutly "It is growing dark Will you go my way with me, when it is quite dark? Mind! it is not I who wait for darkness"

Neville replied, that he would accompany him directly But Mr. Crisparkle said he had a moment's call to make on Mr Grewgious as an act of courtesy, and would run across to that gentleman's chambers, and rejoin Neville on his own doorstep, if he would come down there to meet him

Mr Grewgious, bolt upright as usual, sat taking his wine in the dusk at his open window, his wineglass and decanter on the round table at his elbow, himself and his legs on the window-seat, only one hinge in his whole body, like a bootjack

"How do you do, reverend sir?" said Mr Grewgious, with abundant offers of hospitality, which were as cordially declined as made "And how is your charge getting on over the way in the set that I had the pleasure of recom-

mending to you as vacant and eligible?"

Mr Crisparkle replied suitably "I am glad you approve of them," said Mr Grewgious, "because I entertain a sort of fancy for having him under my eye"

As Mr Grewgious had to turn his eye up considerably before he could see the chambers, the phrase was to be

taken figuratively and not literally

"And how did you leave Mr Jasper, reverend sir?" said Mr. Grewgious

Mr Crisparkle had left him pretty well

"And where did you leave Mr Jasper, reverend sir?"

Mr Crisparkle had left him at Cloisterham

"And when did you leave Mr Jasper, reverend sir?"
That morning

"Umps!" said Mr Grewgious "He didn't say he was coming, perhaps?"

"Coming where?"

"Anywhere, for instance?" said Mr Grewgious

"No"

"Because here he is," said Mr Grewgious, who had asked all these questions, with his preoccupied glance directed out at window "And he don't look agreeable. does he?"

Mr Crisparkle was craning towards the window, when

Mr Grewgious added -

"If you will kindly step round here behind me, in the gloom of the room, and will cast your eye at the secondfloor landing window in yonder house, I think you will hardly fail to see a slinking individual in whom I recognize our local friend "

"You are right!" cried Mr Crisparkle

"Umps!" said Mr Grewgious Then he added, turning his face so abruptly that his head nearly came into collision with Mr Crisparkle's "What should you say that our local friend was up to?"

The last passage he had been shown in the Diary returned on Mr Crisparkle's mind with the force of a strong recoil, and he asked Mr Grewgious if he thought it possible that Neville was to be harassed by the keeping of a watch upon him?

"A watch?" repeated Mr Grewgious, musingly "Ay!"

"Which would not only of itself haunt and torture his life," said Mr Crisparkle, warmly, "but would expose him to the torment of a perpetually reviving suspicion, whatever he might do, or wherever he might go"

"Av!" said Mr Grewgious, musingly still "Do I see

him waiting for you?'

"No doubt you do '

"Then would you have the goodness to excuse my getting up to see you out, and to go out to join him, and to go the way that you were going, and to take no notice of our local friend? said Mr Grewgious "I entertain a sort of fancy for having him under my eye to-night, do you know?"

Mr Crisparkle, with a significant nod, complied, and rejoining Neville, went away with him They dined together, and parted at the yet unfinished and undeveloped railway station Mr Crisparkle to get home, Neville to walk the streets, cross the bridges, make a wide round of the city in the friendly darkness, and tire himself out

It was midnight when he returned from his solitary expedition and climbed his staircase. The night was hot, and the windows of the staircase were all wide open. Coming to the top, it gave him a passing chill of surprise (there being no room but his up there) to find a stranger sitting on the window-sill, more after the manner of a venturesome glazier than an amateur ordinarily careful of his neck, in fact, so much more outside the window than inside, as to suggest the thought that he must have come up by the water-spout instead of the stairs

The stranger said nothing until Neville put his key in his door, then, seeming to make sure of his identity from the

action, he spoke -

"I beg your pardon," he said, coming from the window with a frank and smiling air, and a prepossessing address, "the beans"

Neville was quite at a loss

"Runners," said the visitor "Scarlet Next door at the back"

"Oh," returned Neville "And the mignonette and wallflower?"

"The same," said the visitor

"Pray walk in"

"Thank you"

Neville lighted his candles, and the visitor sat down A handsome gentleman, with a young face, but with an older figure in its robustness and its breadth of shoulder, say a man of eight-and-twenty, or at the utmost thirty, so extremely sunburnt that the contrast between his brown visage and the white forehead shaded out of doors by his hat, and the glimpses of white throat below the neckerchief, would have been almost ludicrous but for his broad temples, bright blue eyes, clustering brown hair, and laughing teeth

"I have noticed," said he, "-my name is Tartar"

Neville inclined his head

"I have noticed (excuse me) that you shut yourself up a good deal, and that you seem to like my garden aloft here If you would like a little more of it, I could throw out a few lines and stays between my windows and yours, which

the runners would take to directly And I have some the runners would take to directly. And I have some boxes, both of mignonette and wallflower, that I could shove on along the gutter (with a boathook I have by me) to your windows, and draw back again when they wanted watering or gardening, and shove on again when they were ship-shape, so that they would cause you no trouble. I couldn't take this liberty without asking your permission, so I venture to ask it. Tartar, corresponding set, next door "

"You are very kind"

"Not at all I ought to apologize for looking in so late But having noticed (excuse me) that you generally walk out at night, I thought I should inconvenience you least by

at hight, I thought I should inconvenience you least by awaiting your return I am always afraid of inconveniencing busy men, being an idle man "

"I should not have thought so, from your appearance"

"No? I take it as a compliment In fact, I was bred in the Royal Navy, and was First Lieutenant when I quitted it. But, an uncle disappointed in the service leaving me his property on condition that I left the Navy, I accepted the fortune, and resigned my commission"

"Lately, I presume?"

"Well, I had had twelve or fifteen years of knocking about first I came here some nine months before you, I had had one crop before you came I chose this place, because, having served last in a little corvette, I knew I should feel more at home where I had a constant opportunity of knocking my head against the ceiling Besides, it would never do for a man who had been aboard ship from his boyhood to turn luxurious all at once. Besides, again, having been accustomed to a very short allowance of land all my life, I thought I'd feel my way to the command of a landed estate, by beginning in boxes"

Whimsically as this was said, there was a touch of merry

earnestness in it that made it doubly whimsical

"However," said the Lieutenant, "I have talked quite enough about myself It is not my way, I hope, it has merely been to present myself to you naturally If you will allow me to take the liberty I have described, it will be a charity, for it will give me something more to do. And you are not to suppose that it will entail any interruption or intrusion on you, for that is far from my intention"

Neville replied that he was greatly obliged, and that he

thankfully accepted the kind proposal

"I am very glad to take your windows in tow," said the Lieutenant "From what I have seen of you when I have been gardening at mine, and you have been looking on, I have thought you (excuse me) rather too studious and delicate May I ask, is your health at all affected?"

"I have undergone some mental distress," said Neville,

confused, "which has stood me in the stead of illness"

"Pardon me," said Mr Tartar

With the greatest delicacy he shifted his ground to the windows again, and asked if he could look at one of them On Neville's opening it, he immediately sprang out, as if he were going aloft with a whole watch in an emergency, and were setting a bright example

"For Heaven's sake," cried Neville, "don't do that? Where are you going, Mr Tartar? You'll be dashed to

pieces!"

"All well!" said the Lieutenant, coolly looking about him on the housetop "All taut and trim here. Those lines and stays shall be rigged before you turn out in the morning. May I take this short cut home, and say goodnight?"

"Mr Tartar!" urged Neville "Pray! It makes me

giddy to see you!"

But Mr Tartar, with a wave of his hand and the deftness of a cat, had already dipped through his scuttle of scarlet

runners without breaking a leaf, and "gone below"

Mr Grewgious, his bedroom window-blind held aside with his hand, happened at that moment to have Neville's chambers under his eye for the last time that night. Fortunately his eye was on the front of the house and not the back, or this remarkable appearance and disappearance might have broken his rest as a phenomenon. But Mr Grewgious seeing nothing there, not even a light in the windows, his gaze wandered from the windows to the stars, as if he would have read in them something that was hidden from him. Many of us would, if we could, but

none of us so much as know our letters in the stars yet or seem likely to do it, in this state of existence—and few languages can be read until their alphabets are mastered

CHAPTER XVIII

A SETTLER IN CLOISTERHAM

At about this time a stranger appeared in Cloisterham, a white-haired personage with black eyebrows. Being buttoned up in a tightish blue surtout, with a bluff waistcoat and grey trousers, he had something of a military air, but he announced himself at the Crozier (the orthodox hotel, where he put up with a portmanteau) as an idle dog who lived upon his means, and he farther announced that he had a mind to take a lodging in the picturesque old city for a month or two, with a view of settling down there altogether. Both announcements were made in the coffeeroom of the Crozier, to all whom it might or might not concern, by the stranger as he stood with his back to the empty fireplace, waiting for his fried sole, veal cutlet, and pint of sherry. And the waiter (business being chronically slack at the Crozier) represented all whom it might or might not concern, and absorbed the whole of the information.

This gentleman's white head was unusually large, and his shock of white hair was unusually thick and ample "I suppose, waiter," he said shaking his shock of hair, as a Newfoundland dog might shake his before sitting down to dinner, "that a fair lodging for a single buffer might be found in these parts, eh?"

The waiter had no doubt of it

"Something old," said the gentleman "Take my hat down for a moment from that peg, will you? No, I don't want it, look into it What do you see written there?"

The waiter read "Datchery"

"Now you know my name," said the gentleman, "Dick Datchery Hang it up again. I was saying something

old is what I should prefer, something odd and out of the way, something venerable, architectural, and inconvenient "

"We have a good choice of inconvenient lodgings in the town, sir, I think," replied the waiter, with modest confidence in its resources that way, "indeed, I have no doubt that we could suit you that far, however particular you might be But a architectural lodging! 'That seemed to trouble the waiter's head, and he shook it

"Anything Cathedraly, now," Mr Datchery suggested

"Mr Tope," said the waiter, brightening, as he rubbed his chin with his hand, "would be the likeliest party to inform in that line"

"Who is Mr Tope?" inquired Dick Datchery

The waiter explained that he was the Verger, and that Mrs Tope had indeed once upon a time let lodgings herself—or offered to let them, but that as nobody had ever taken them, Mrs Tope's window-bill, long a Cloisterham Institution, had disappeared, probably had tumbled down one day, and never been put up again

"I'll call on Mrs Tope," said Mr Datchery, "after

dınner "

So when he had done his dinner, he was duly directed to the spot and sallied out for it. But the Crozier being an hotel of a most retiring disposition, and the waiter's directions being fatally precise, he soon became bewildered, and went boggling about and about the Cathedral Tower, whenever he could catch a glimpse of it, with a general impression on his mind that Mrs. Tope's was somewhere very near it, and that, like the children in the game of hot boiled beans and very good butter, he was warm in his search when he saw the Tower, and cold when he didn't see it

He was getting very cold indeed when he came upon a fragment of burial-ground, in which an unhappy sheep was grazing. Unhappy, because a hideous small boy was stoning it through the railings, and had already lamed it in one leg, and was much excited by the benevolent sportsmanlike purpose of breaking its other three legs, and bringing it down

"'It 'im agin!" cried the boy, as the poor creature leaped. "and made a dint in his wool"

- "Let him be!" said Mr Datchery "Don't you see you have lamed him?"
- "Yer lie," returned the sportsman "E went and lamed isself I see im do it, and I giv' im a shy as a Widdy-warning to im not to go a-bruisin' is master's mutton any more"

"Come here"

"I won't, I'll come when yer can ketch me"

"Stay there then, and show me which is Mr Tope's"

- "'Ow can I stay here and show you which is Topeseses, when Topeseses is t'other side the Kinfreederal, and over the crossings and round ever so many corners? Stoo-pid! Ya-a-ah!"
 - "Show me where it is, and I'll give you something"

"Come on, then "

This brisk dialogue concluded, the boy led the way, and by-and-by stopped at some distance from an arched passage, pointing

"Lookee yonder You see that there winder and

door?"

"That's Tope's?"

"Yer lie, it ain't That's Jarsper's"

"Indeed!" said Mr Datchery, with a second look of some interest

"Yes, and I am't a-goin' no nearer 'Im, I tell yer"

"Why not?"

"'Cos I am't a-goin' to be lifted off my legs and 'ave my braces bust and be choked, not if I knows it, and not by 'im Wait till I set a jolly good flint a-flyin' at the back o' 'is jolly old 'ed some day! Now look t'other side the harch, not the side where Jarsper's door is, t'other side"

"I see"

"A little way in, o' that side, there's a low door, down two steps. That's Topeseses with 'is name on a hoval plate."

"Good. See here," said Mr Datchery, producing a

shilling "You owe me half of this"

"Yer lie, I don't owe yer nothing; I never seen yer"

"I tell you you owe me half of this, because I have no sixpence in my pocket. So the next time you meet me you shall do something else for me, to pay me?"

"All right, give us 'old "

"What is your name, and where do you live?"

"Deputy Traveller's Twopenny, 'cross the green"

The boy instantly darted off with the shilling, lest Mr Datchery should repent, but stopped at a safe distance, on the happy chance of his being uneasy in his mind about it, to goad him with a demon dance expressive of its irrevocability

Mr Datchery, taking off his hat to give that shock of white hair of his another shake, seemed quite resigned, and

betook himself whither he had been directed

Mr Tope's official dwelling, communicating by an upper stair with Mr Tasper's (hence Mrs Tope's attendance on that gentleman), was of very modest proportions, and partook of the character of a cool dungeon Its ancient walls were massive, and its rooms rather seemed to have been dug out of them, than to have been designed beforehand with any reference to them The main door opened at once on a chamber of no describable shape, with a groined roof, which in its turn opened on another chamber of no describable shape, with another groined roof their windows small, and in the thickness of the walls These two chambers, close as to their atmosphere, and swarthy as to their illumination by natural light, were the apartments which Mrs Tope had so long offered to an unappreciative Mr Datchery, however, was more appreciative found that if he sat with the main door open he would enjoy the passing society of all comers to and fro by the gateway, and would have light enough He found that if Mr and Mrs Tope, living overhead, used for their own egress and ingress a little side stair that came plump into the Precincts by a door opening outward, to the surprise and inconvenience of a limited public of pedestrians in a narrow way, he would be alone, as in a separate residence found the rent moderate, and everything as quaintly inconvenient as he could desire He agreed, therefore, to take the lodging then and there, and money down, possession to be had next evening, on condition that reference was permitted him to Mr Jasper as occupying the gatehouse, of which on the other side of the gateway, the Verger's hole-in-the-wall was an appanage or subsidiary part.

The poor dear gentleman was very solitary and very sad, Mrs Tope said, but she had no doubt he would "speak for her" Perhaps Mr Datchery had heard something of what had occurred there last winter?

Mr Datchery had as confused a knowledge of the event in question, on trying to recall it, as he well could have He begged Mrs Tope's pardon when she found it incumbent on her to correct him in every detail of his summary of the facts, but pleaded that he was merely a single buffer getting through life upon his means as idly as he could, and that so many people were so constantly making away with so many other people, as to render it difficult for a buffer of an easy temper to preserve the circumstances of the several cases unmixed in his mind

Mr Jasper proving willing to speak for Mrs Tope, Mr Datchery, who had sent up his card, was invited to ascend the postern staircase The Mayor was there, Mr Tope said, but he was not to be regarded in the light of company,

as he and Mr Jasper were great friends

"I beg pardon," said Mr Datchery, making a leg with beg pardon, said Mr Datchery, making a leg with his hat under his arm, as he addressed himself equally to both gentlemen, "a selfish precaution on my part and not personally interesting to anybody but myself. But as a buffer living on his means, and having an idea of doing it in this lovely place in peace and quiet, for remaining span of life, I beg to ask if the Tope family are quite respectable?"

Mr Jasper could answer for that without the slightest

hesitation

"That is enough, sir," said Mr Datchery
"My friend the Mayor," added Mr Jasper, presenting
Mr Datchery with a courtly motion of his hand towards that potentate, "whose recommendation is actually much more important to a stranger than that of an obscure person

like myself, will testify in their behalf, I am sure "

"The Worshipful the Mayor," said Mr Datchery, with a low bow, "places me under an infinite obligation"

"Very good people, sir, Mr and Mrs Tope," said Mr Sapsea, with condescension "Very good opinions Very well behaved Very respectful Much approved by the Deep and Chapter" Dean and Chapter."

"The Worshipful the Mayor gives them a character," said Mr Datchery, "of which they may indeed be proud I would ask His Honour (if I might be permitted) whether there are not many objects of great interest in the city which is under his beneficent sway?"

"We are, sir," returned Mr Sapsea, "an ancient city, and an ecclesiastical city We are a constitutional city, as it becomes such a city to be, and we uphold and main-

tain our glorious privileges "

"His Honour," said Mr Datchery, bowing, "inspires me with a desire to know more of the city, and confirms me in my inclination to end my days in the city"

"Retired from the Army, sir?" suggested Mr Sapsea

"His Honour the Mayor does me too much credit," returned Mr Datchery

"Navy, sır?" suggested Mr Sapsea

"Again," repeated Mr Datchery, "His Honour the Mayor does me too much credit"

"Diplomacy is a fine profession," said Mr Sapsea, as a

general remark

"There, I confess, His Honour the Mayor is too many for me," said Mr Datchery, with an ingenious smile and bow, "even a diplomatic bird must fall to such a gun"

Now this was very soothing Here was a gentleman of a great, not to say a grand, address, accustomed to rank and dignity, really setting a fine example how to behave to a Mayor There was something in that third-person style of being spoken to, that Mr Sapsea found particularly recognizant of his merits and position

"But I crave pardon," said Mr Datchery "His Honour the Mayor will bear with me, if for a moment I have been deluded into occupying his time, and have forgotten the humble claims upon my own, of my hotel, the

Crozier "

"Not at all, sir," said Mr Sapsea "I am returning home, and if you would like to take the exterior of our Cathedral in your way, I shall be glad to point it out"

"His Honour the Mayor," said Mr Datchery, "is more

than kind and gracious "

As Mr Datchery, when he had made his acknowledg-

ments to Mr Jasper, could not be induced to go out of the room before the Worshipful, the Worshipful led the way down-stairs. Mr Datchery following with his hat under his arm, and his shock of white hair streaming in the evening breeze

"Might I ask, His Honour," said Mr Datchery, "whether that gentleman we have just left is the gentleman of whom I have heard in the neighbourhood as being much afflicted by the loss of a nephew, and concentrating his life on avenging the loss?"

"That is the gentleman John Jasper, sir"

"Would His Honour allow me to inquire whether there are strong suspicions of any one?"

"More than suspicions, sir," returned Mr Sapsea, "all but certainties "

"Only think now!" cried Mr Datchery

"But proof, sir, proof must be built up stone by stone," said the Mayor "As I say, the end crowns the work It is not enough that Justice should be morally certain, she must be immorally certain-legally, that is "

"His Honour," said Mr. Datchery, "reminds me of the

nature of the law Immoral How true!"

"As I say, sir," pompously went on the Mayor, "the arm of the law is a strong arm, and a long arm the way I put it A strong arm and a long arm "

"How forcible!—And yet, again, how true!" murmured

Mr Datchery.

"And without betraying what I call the secrets of the prison-house," said Mr Sapsea, "the secrets of the prison-house is the term I used on the bench"

"And what other term than His Honour's would express

it?" said Mr. Datchery

"Without, I say, betraying them, I predict to you, knowing the iron will of the gentleman we have just left (I take the bold step of calling it iron, on account of its strength), that in this case, the long arm will reach, and the strong arm will strike.—This is our Cathedral, sir The best judges are pleased to admire it, and the best among our townsmen own to being a little vain of it"

All this time Mr Datchery had walked with his hat

under his arm, and his white hair streaming. He had an odd momentary appearance upon him of having forgotten his hat, when Mr Sapsea now touched it, and he clapped his hand up to his head as if with some vague expectation of finding another hat upon it

"Pray be covered, sir," entreated Mr Sapsea, magnifi-

cently implying "I shall not mind it, I assure you"

"His Honour is very good, but I do it for coolness,"

said Mr Datchery

Then Mr Datchery admired the Cathedral, and Mr Sapsea pointed it out as if he himself had invented and built it there were a few details indeed of which he did not approve, but those he glossed over, as if the workmen had made mistakes in his absence. The Cathedral disposed of, he led the way by the churchyard, and stopped to extol the beauty of the evening-by chance-in the immediate vicinity of Mrs Sapsea's epitaph

"And by-the-bye," said Mr Sapsea, appearing to descend from an elevation to remember it all of a sudden, like Apollo shooting down from Olympus to pick up his forgotten lyre, "that is one of our small lions The partiality of our people has made it so, and strangers have been seen taking a copy of it now and then I am not a judge of it myself, for it is a little work of my own But it was troublesome to turn, sir, I may say, difficult to turn with elegance"

Mr Datchery became so ecstatic over Mr Sapsea's composition, that, in spite of his intention to end his days in Cloisterham, and therefore his probably having in reserve many opportunities of copying it, he would have transcribed it into his pocket-book on the spot, but for the slouching towards them of its material producer and perpetuator, Durdles, whom Mr Sapsea hailed, not sorry to show him a bright example of behaviour to superiors

"Ah. Durdles! This is the mason, sir, one of our Cloisterham worthies, everybody here knows Durdles Mr Datchery, Durdles, a gentleman who is going to settle here."

"I wouldn't do it if I was him," growled Durdles. "We're a heavy lot"

"You surely don't speak for yourself, Mr Durdles," returned Mr Datchery, "any more than for His Honour" "Who's His Honour" demanded Durdles

"His Honour the Mayor"

"I never was brought afore him," said Durdles, with anything but the look of a loyal subject of the mayoralty, "and it'll be time enough for me to Honour him when I am Until which, and when, and where,

> 'Mister Sapsea is his name, England is his nation, Cloisterham's his dwelling place, Aukshneer's his occupation '"

Here, Deputy (preceded by a flying oyster-shell) appeared upon the scene, and requested to have the sum of threepence instantly "chucked" to him by Mr Durdles, whom he had been vainly seeking up and down, as lawful wages overdue While that gentleman, with his bundle under his arm, slowly found and counted out the money, Mr Sapsea informed the new settler of Durdles's habits, pursuits, abode, and reputation "I suppose a curious stranger might come to see you, and your works, Mr Durdles, at any odd time?" said Mr Datchery upon that "Any gentleman is welcome to come and see me any evening if he brings liquor for two with him," returned Durdles, with a penny between his teeth and certain halfpence in his hands, "or if he likes to make it twice two, he'll be doubly welcome"

"I shall come Master Deputy, what do you owe me?"

" A 10b"

"Mind you pay me honestly with the job of showing me Mr Durdles's house when I want to go there"

Deputy, with a piercing broadside of whistle through the whole gap in his mouth, as a receipt in full for all arrears, vanished

The Worshipful and the Worshipper then passed on together until they parted, with many ceremonies, at the Worshipful's door, even then the Worshipper carried his hat under his arm, and gave his streaming white hair to the breeze

Said Mr Datchery to himself that night, as he looked at his white hair in the gas-lighted looking-glass over the coffee-room chimney-piece at the Crozier, and shook it out "For a single buffer, of an easy temper, living idly on his means, I have had a rather busy afternoon!"

CHAPTER XIX

SHADOW ON THE SUN-DIA

AGAIN Miss Twinkleton has delivered her valedictory address, with the accompaniments of white-wine and pound-cake, and again the young ladies have departed to their several homes. Helena Landless has left the Nuns' House to attend her brother's fortunes, and pretty Rosa is alone.

Cloisterham is so bright and sunny in these summer days, that the Cathedral and the monastery-ruin show as if their strong walls were transparent A soft glow seems to shine from within them, rather than upon them from without, such is their mellowness as they look forth on the hot corn-fields and the smoking roads that distantly wind among them The Cloisterham gardens blush with ripening fruit Time was when travel-stained pilgrims rode in clattering parties through the city's welcome shades, time is when wayfarers, leading a gipsy life between haymaking time and harvest, and looking as if they were just made of the dust of the earth, so very dusty are they, lounge about on cool door-steps, trying to mend their unmendable shoes, or giving them to the city kennels as a hopeless job, and seeking others in the bundles that they carry, along with their yet unused sickles swathed in bands of straw all the more public pumps there is much cooling of bare feet, together with much bubbling and gurgling of drinking with hand to spout on the part of these Bedouins, the Cloisterham police meanwhile looking askant from their beats with suspicion, and manifest impatience that the intruders should depart from within the civic bounds, and once more fry themselves on the simmering high roads.

On the afternoon of such a day, when the last Cathedral service is done, and when that side of the High Street on which the Nuns' House stands is in grateful shade, save where its quaint old garden opens to the west between the boughs of trees, a servant informs Rosa, to her terror, that Mr Jasper desires to see her

If he had chosen his time for finding her at a disadvantage he could have done no better. Perhaps he has chosen it. Helena Landless is gone, Mrs. Tisher is absent on leave, Miss Twinkleton (in her amateur state of existence) has contributed herself and a veal pie to a picnic.

"Oh, why, why, why, did you say I was at home!" cried

Rosa, helplessly

The maid replies, that Mr Jasper never asked the question That he said he knew she was at home, and begged she might be told that he asked to see her

"What shall I do! what shall I do!" thinks Rosa, clasp-

ing her hands

Possessed by a kind of desperation, she adds in the next breath, that she will come to Mr Jasper in the garden. She shudders at the thought of being shut up with him in the house, but many of its windows command the garden, and she can be seen as well as heard there, and can shriek in the free air and run away. Such is the wild idea that flutters through her mind

She has never seen him since the fatal night, except when she was questioned before the Mayor, and then he was present in gloomy watchfulness, as representing his lost nephew and burning to avenge him. She hangs her garden-hat on her arm, and goes out. The moment she sees him from the porch, leaning on the sun-dial, the old horrible feeling of being compelled by him, asserts its hold upon her. She feels that she would even then go back, but that he draws her feet towards him. She cannot resist, and sits down, with her head bent, on the garden-seat beside the sun-dial. She cannot look up at him for abhorrence, but she has perceived that he is dressed in deep mourning. So is she. It was not so at first, but the lost has long been given up, and mourned for, as dead.

He would begin by touching her hand. She feels the intention, and draws her hand back. His eyes are then fixed upon her, she knows, though her own see nothing but the grass

"I have been waiting," he begins, "for some time, to

be summoned back to my duty near you".

After several times forming her lips, which she knows he is closely watching, into the shape of some other hesitating reply, and then into none, she answers "Duty, sir?"

"The duty of teaching you, serving you as your faithful music-master"

"I have left off that study"

'Not left off, I think Discontinued I was told by your guardian that you discontinued it under the shock that we have all felt so acutely When will you resume?"

"Never, sır"

"Never? You could have done no more if you had loved my dear boy"

"I did love him!" cried Rosa, with a flash of anger.

"Yes, but not quite—not quite in the right way, shall I say? Not in the intended and expected way Much as my dear boy was, unhappily, too self-conscious and self-satisfied (I'll draw no parallel between him and you in that respect) to love as he should have loved, or as any one in his place would have loved—must have loved!"

She sits in the same still attitude, but shrinking a little

more

"Then, to be told that you discontinued your study with me, was to be politely told that you abandoned it alto-

gether?" he suggested

"Yes," says Rosa, with sudden spirit "The politeness was my guardian's, not mine I told him that I was resolved to leave off, and that I was determined to stand by my resolution"

"And you still are?"

"I still am, sir And I beg not to be questioned any more about it At all events, I will not answer any more: I have that in my power"

She is so conscious of his looking at her with a gloating admiration of the touch of anger on her, and the fire and animation it brings with it, that even as her spirit rises, it falls again, and she struggles with a sense of shame, affront, and fear, much as she did that night at the piano

"I will not question you any more, since you object to it so much, I will confess—"

"I do not wish to hear you, sir," cries Rosa, rising
This time he does touch her with his outstretched hand

In shrinking from it, she shrinks into her seat again

"We must sometimes act in opposition to our wishes," he tells her in a low voice "You must do so now, or do more harm to others than you can ever set right"

"What harm?"

"Presently, presently You question me, you see, and surely that's not fair when you forbid me to question you Nevertheless, I will answer the question presently Dearest Rosa! Charming Rosa!"

She starts up again

This time he does not touch her But his face looks so wicked and menacing, as he stands leaning against the sun-dial—setting, as it were, his black mark upon the very face of day-that her flight is arrested by horror as she looks at him

"I do not forget how many windows command a view of us," he says, glancing towards them "I will not touch you again, I will come no nearer to you than I am Sit down, and there will be no mighty wonder in your music-master's leaning idly against a pedestal and speaking with you, remembering all that has happened, and our shares in it Sit down, my beloved "

She would have gone once more—was all but gone and once more his face, darkly threatening what would follow if she went, has stopped her Looking at him with the expression of the instant frozen on her face, she sits down on the seat again

"Rosa, even when my dear boy was affianced to you, I loved you madly, even when I thought his happiness in having you for his wife was certain, I loved you madly,

even when I strove to make him more ardently devoted to you I loved you madly, even when he gave me the picture of your lovely face so carelessly traduced by him, which I feigned to hang always in my sight for his sake, but worshipped in torment for years, I loved you madly, in the distasteful work of the day, in the wakeful misery of the night, girded by sordid realities, or wandering through Paradises and Hells of visions into which I rushed, carrying your image in my arms, I loved you madly "

If anything could make his words more hideous to her than they are in themselves, it would be the contrast between the violence of his look and delivery, and the com-

posure of his assumed attitude

"I endured it all in silence So long as you were his, or so long as I supposed you to be his, I hid my secret

loyally Did I not?"

This lie, so gross, while the mere words in which it is told are so true, is more than Rosa can endure. She answers with kindling indignation "You were as false throughout, sir, as you are now. You were false to him, daily and hourly. You know that you made my life unhappy by your pursuit of me. You know that you made me afraid to open his generous eyes, and that you forced me, for his own trusting, good, good sake, to keep the truth from him, that you were a bad, bad man!"

His preservation of his easy attitude rendering his working features and his convulsive hands absolutely diabolical, he returns, with a fierce extreme of admira-

tion -

"How beautiful you are! You are more beautiful in anger than in repose I don't ask you for your love, give me yourself and your hatred, give me yourself and that pretty rage, give me yourself and that enchanting scorn, it will be enough for me"

Impatient tears rise to the eyes of the trembling little beauty, and her face flames, but as she again rises to leave him in indignation, and seek protection within the house, he stretches out his hand towards the porch, as though he invited her to enter it

"I told you you rare charmer, you sweet witch, that

you must stay and hear me, or do more harm than can ever be undone You asked me what harm Stay, and I will tell you Go, and I will do it!"

Again Rosa quails before his threatening face, though innocent of its meaning, and she remains. Her panting breathing comes and goes as if it would choke her, but

with a repressive hand upon her bosom, she remains

"I have made my confession that my love is mad It is so mad, that had the ties between me and my dear lost boy been one silken thread less strong, I might have swept even him from your side when you favoured him"

A film comes over the eyes she raises for an instant, as

though he had turned her faint

"Even him," he repeats "Yes, even him! Rosa, you see me and you hear me Judge for yourself whether any other admirer shall love you and live whose life is in my hand"

"What do you mean, sir?"

"I mean to show you how mad my love is It was hawked through the late inquiries by Mr Crisparkle, that young Landless had confessed to him that he was a rival of my lost boy That is an inexpiable offence in my eyes. The same Mr Crisparkle knows under my hand that I have devoted myself to the murderer's discovery and destruction, be he whom he might, and that I determined to discuss the mystery with no one until I should hold the clue in which to entangle the murderer as in a net I have since worked patiently to wind and wind it round him, and it is slowly winding as I speak."

"Your belief, if you believe in the criminality of Mr Landless, is not Mr Crisparkle's belief, and he is a good

man," Rosa retorts

"My belief is my own; and I reserve it, worshipped of my soul! Circumstances may accumulate so strongly even against an unocent man, that directed, sharpened, and pointed, they may slay him One wanting link discovered by perseverance against a guilty man, proves his guilt, however slight its evidence before, and he dies Young Landless stands in deadly peril either way"

"If you really suppose," Rosa pleads with him, turning

paler, "that I favour Mr Landless, or that Mr Landless has ever in any way addressed himself to me, you are wrong"

He puts that from him with a slighting action of his

hand and a curled lip

"I was going to show you how madly I love you More madly now than ever, for I am willing to renounce the second object that has arisen in my life to divide it with you, and henceforth to have no object in existence but you only Miss Landless has become your bosom friend You care for her peace of mind?"

"I love her dearly"

dear one!"

"You care for her good name?"
"I have said, sir, I love her dearly"

"I am unconsciously," he observes with a smile, as he folds his hands upon the sun-dial and leans his chin upon them, so that his talk would seem from the windows (faces occasionally come and go there) to be of the airiest and playfullest—"I am unconsciously giving offence by questioning again. I will simply make statements, therefore, and not put questions. You do care for your bosom friend's good name, and you do care for her peace of mind. Then remove the shadow of the gallows from her,

"You dare propose to me to-"

"Darling, I dare propose to you Stop there If it be bad to idolize you, I am the worst of men, if it be good, I am the best My love for you is above all other love, and my truth to you is above all other truth Let me have hope and favour, and I am a forsworn man for your sake"

Rosa puts her hands to her temples, and, pushing back her hair, looks wildly and abhorrently at him, as though she were trying to piece together what it is his deep pur-

pose to present to her only in fragments

"Reckon up nothing at this moment, angel, but the sacrifices that I lay at those dear feet, which I could fall down among the vilest ashes and kiss, and put upon my head as a poor savage might. There is my fidelity to my dear boy after death. Tread upon it!"

With an action of his hands, as though he cast down something precious

"There is the inexpiable offence against my adoration

of you Spurn it!"

With a similar action

With another repetition of the action

"There is my past and my present wasted life There is the desolation of my heart and my soul There is my peace, there is my despair Stamp them into the dust, so that you take me, were it even mortally hating me!"

The frightful vehemence of the man, now reaching its full height, so additionally terrifies her as to break the spell that has held her to the spot. She swiftly moves towards the porch, but in an instant he is at her side, and speaking

ın her ear

"Rosa, I am self-repressed again I am walking calmly beside you to the house I shall wait for some encouragement and hope I shall not strike too soon Give me a sign that you attend to me"

She slightly and constrainedly moves her hand

"Not a word of this to any one, or it will bring down the blow, as certainly as night follows day Another sign that you attend to me"

She moves her hand once more

"I love you, love you, love you! If you were to cast me off now—but you will not—you would never be rid of me No one should come between us I would pursue you to the death"

The handmaid coming out to open the gate for him, he quietly pulls off his hat as a parting salute, and goes away with no greater show of agitation than is visible in the effigy of Mr Sapsea's father opposite. Rosa faints in going up-stairs, and is carefully carried to her room and laid down on her bed. A thunderstorm is coming on, the maids say, and the hot and stifling air has overset the pretty dear no wonder, they have felt their own knees all of a tremble all day long

CHAPTER XX.

A FLIGHT

Rosa no sooner came to herself than the whole of the late interview was before her. It even seemed as if it had pursued her into her insensibility, and she had not had a moment's unconsciousness of it. What to do, she was at a frightened loss to know the only one clear thought in her mind was, that she must fly from this terrible man

But where could she take refuge, and how could she go? She had never breathed her dread of him to any one but Helena. If she went to Helena, and told her what had passed, that very act might bring down the irreparable mischief that he threatened he had the power, and that she knew he had the will, to do. The more fearful he appeared to her excited memory and imagination, the more alarming her responsibility appeared, seeing that a slight mistake on her part, either in action or delay, might let his malevolence loose on Helena's brother

Rosa's mind throughout the last six months had been stormily confused A half-formed, wholly unexpressed suspicion tossed in it, now heaving itself up, and now sinking into the deep, now gaining palpability, and now losing Jasper's self-absorption in his nephew when he was alive, and his unceasing pursuit of the inquiry how he came by his death, if he were dead, were themes so rife in the place, that no one appeared able to suspect the possibility of foul play at his hands She had asked herself the question, "Am I so wicked in my thoughts as to conceive a wickedness that others cannot imagine?" Then she had considered. Did the suspicion come of her previous recoiling from him before the fact? And if so, was not that a proof of its baselessness? Then she had reflected, "What motive could he have, according to my accusation?" She was ashamed to answer in her mind, "The motive of gaining me!" And covered her face, as if the lightest shadow of the idea of founding murder on such an idle vanity were a crime almost as great

She ran over in her mind again, all that he had said by the sun-dial in the garden He had persisted in treating the disappearance as murder, consistently with his whole public course since the finding of the watch and shirt-pin If he were afraid of the crime being traced out, would he not rather encourage the idea of a voluntary disappearance? He had even declared that if the ties between him and his nephew had been less strong, he might have swept "even him" away from her side Was that like his having really done so? He had spoken of laying his six months' labours in the cause of a just vengeance at her feet Would he have done that, with that violence of passion, if they were a pretence? Would he have ranged them with his desolate heart and soul, his wasted life, his peace and his despair? The very first sacrifice that he represented himself as making for her, was his fidelity to his dear boy after death Surely these facts were strong against a fancy that scarcely dared to hint itself And yet he was so terrible a man! In short, the poor girl (for what could she know of the criminal intellect, which its own professed students perpetually misread, because they persist in trying to reconcile it with the average intellect of average men, instead of identifying it as a horrible wonder apart) could get by no road to any other conclusion than that he was a terrible man, and must be fled from

She had been Helena's stay and comfort during the whole time. She had constantly assured her of her full belief in her brother's innocence, and of her sympathy with him in his misery. But she had never seen him since the disappearance, nor had Helena ever spoken one word of his avowal to Mr Crisparkle in regard of Rosa, though as a part of the interest of the case it was well known far and wide. He was Helena's unfortunate brother to her, and nothing more. The assurance she had given her odious suitor was strictly true, though it would have been better (she considered now) if she could have restrained herself from so giving it. Afraid of him as the bright and delicate little creature was, her spirit swelled at the thought of his knowing it from her own lips

But where was she to go? Anywhere beyond his reach,

was no reply to the question Somewhere must be thought of She determined to go to her guardian, and to go immediately The feeling she had imparted to Helena on the night of their first confidence, was so strong upon her—the feeling of not being safe from him, and of the solid walls of the old convent being powerless to keep out his ghostly following of her—that no reasoning of her own could calm her terrors The fascination of repulsion had been upon her so long, and now culminated so darkly, that she felt as if he had power to bind her by a spell Glancing out at window, even now, as she rose to dress, the sight of the sun-dial on which he had leaned when he declared himself, turned her cold, and made her shrink from it, as though he had invested it with some awful quality from his own nature

She wrote a hurried note to Miss Twinkleton, saying that she had sudden reason for wishing to see her guardian promptly and had gone to him, also, entreating the good lady not to be uneasy, for all was well with her. She hurried a few quite useless articles into a very little bag, left the note in a conspicuous place, and went out, softly

closing the gate after her

It was the first time she had ever been even in Cloisterham High Street alone. But knowing all its ways and windings very well, she hurried straight to the corner from which the omnibus departed It was, at that very moment, going off "Stop and take me, if you please, Ioe I am obliged to

go to London "

In less than another minute she was on her road to the railway, under Joe's protection Joe waited on her when she got there, put her safely into the railway carriage, and handed in the very little bag after her, as though it were some enormous trunk, hundredweights heavy, which she must on no account endeavour to lift

"Can you go round when you get back, and tell Miss

Twinkleton that you saw me safely off, Joe?"

"It shall be done, Miss"
"With my love, please, Joe"

"Yes, Miss—and I wouldn't mind having it myself!"
But Joe did not articulate the last clause, only thought it.

Now that she was whirling away for London in real earnest. Rosa was at leisure to resume the thoughts which her personal hurry had checked The indignant thought that his declaration of love soiled her, that she could only be cleansed from the stain of its impurity by appealing to the honest and true, supported her for a time against her fears, and confirmed her in her hasty resolution. But as the evening grew darker and darker, and the great city impended nearer and nearer, the doubts usual in such cases began to arise Whether this was not a wild proceeding, after all, how Mr Grewgious might regard it, whether she should find him at the journey's end, how she would act if he were absent, what might become of her, alone, in a place so strange and crowded, how if she had but waited and taken counsel first, whether, if she could now go back, she would not do it thankfully, a multitude of such uneasy speculations disturbed her more and more as they accumulated At length the train came into London over the housetops, and down below lay the gritty streets with their yet unneeded lamps aglow, on a hot light summer night "Hiram Grewgious, Esquire, Staple Inn, London"

"Hiram Grewgious, Esquire, Staple Inn, London" This was all Rosa knew of her destination, but it was enough to send her rattling away again in a cab, through deserts of gritty streets, where many people crowded at the corner of courts and byways to get some air, and where many other people walked with a miserably monotonous noise of shuffling of feet on hot paving-stones, and where all the people and all their surroundings were so gritty and

so shabby i

There was music playing here and there, but it did not enliven the case. No barrel-organ mended the matter, and no big drum beat dull care away. Like the chapel bells that were also going here and there, they only seemed to evoke echoes from brick surfaces, and dust from everything. As to the flat wind-instruments, they seemed to have cracked their hearts and souls in pining for the country.

Her jingling conveyance stopped at last at a fast-closed gateway, which appeared to belong to somebody who had gone to bed very early, and was much afraid of housebreakers, Rosa, discharging her conveyance, timidly knocked at this gateway, and was let in, very little bag and all, by a watchman

"Does Mr Grewgious live here?"

"Mr Grewgious lives there, Miss," said the watchman, pointing further in

So Rosa went further in, and, when the clocks were striking ten, stood on P J T 's doorsteps, wondering what

P J T had done with his street-door

Guided by the painted name of Mr Grewgious, she went up-stairs and softly tapped and tapped several times But no one answering, and Mr Grewgious's door-handle yielding to her touch, she went in, and saw her guardian sitting on a window-seat at an open window, with a shaded lamp placed far from him on a table in a corner

Rosa drew nearer to him in the twilight of the room He saw her, and he said, in an under-tone "Good

Heaven!"

Rosa fell upon his neck, with tears, and then he said,

returning her embrace -

"My child, my child! I thought you were your mother!—But what, what, what," he added, soothingly, "has happened? My dear, what has brought you here? Who has brought you here?"

"No one I came alone"

"Lord bless me!" ejaculated Mr Grewgious "Came alone! Why didn't you write to me to come and fetch you?"

"I had no time I took a sudden resolution Poor,

poor Eddy!"

"Ah, poor fellow, poor fellow!"

"His uncle has made love to me I cannot bear it," said Rosa, at once with a burst of tears, and a stamp of her little foot, "I shudder with horror of him, and I have come to you to protect me and all of us from him, if you will?"

"I will," cried Mr Grewgious, with a sudden rush of amazing energy "Damn him!

'Confound his politics!
Frustrate his knavish tricks!
On Thee his hopes to fix?
Damn him again!'"

After this most extraordinary outburst, Mr. Grewgious, quite beside himself, plunged about the room, to all appearance undecided whether he was in a fit of loyal enthusiasm or combative denunciation

He stopped and said, wiping his face "I beg your pardon, my dear, but you will be glad to know I feel better Tell me no more just now, or I might do it again You must be refreshed and cheered What did you take last? Was it breakfast, lunch, dinner, tea, or supper? And what will you take next? Shall it be breakfast, lunch, dinner, tea, or supper?"

The respectful tenderness with which, on one knee before her, he helped her to remove her hat, and disentangle her pretty hair from it, was quite a chivalrous sight Yet who, knowing him only on the surface, would have expected chivalry—and of the true sort, too, not the spu-

rious-from Mr Grewgious?

"Your rest too must be provided for," he went on, "and you shall have the prettiest chamber in Furnival's Your toilet must be provided for, and you shall have everything that an unlimited head chambermaid—by which expression I mean a head chambermaid not limited as to outlay—can procure Is that a bag?" he looked hard at it, sooth to say, it required hard looking at to be seen at all in a dimly lighted room "and is it your property, my dear?"

"Yes, sir I brought it with me"

"It is not an extensive bag," said Mr Grewgious, candidly, "though admirably calculated to contain a day's provision for a canary-bird Perhaps you brought a canary-bird?"

Rosa smiled and shook her head

"If you had, he should have been made welcome," said Mr Grewgious, "and I think he would have been pleased to be hung upon a nail outside and pit himself against our Staple sparrows, whose execution must be admitted to be not quite equal to their intention. Which is the case with so many of us! You didn't say what meal, my dear. Have a nice jumble of all meals."

Rosa thanked him, but said she could only take a cup of tea Mr Grewgious, after several times running out,

and in again, to mention such supplementary items as marmalade, eggs, watercresses, salted fish, and frizzled ham, ran across to Furnival's without his hat, to give his various directions. And soon afterwards they were realized in practice, and the board was spread.

"Lord bless my soul," cried Mr Grewgious, putting the lamp upon it, and taking his seat opposite Rosa, "what a new sensation for a poor old Angular bachelor,

to be sure!"

Rosa's expressive little eyebrows asked him what he meant?

"The sensation of having a sweet young presence in the place, that whitewashes it, paints it, papers it, decorates it with gilding, and makes it Glorious!" said Mr Grewgious "Ah me! Ah me!"

As there was something mournful in his sigh, Rosa, in touching him with her tea-cup, ventured to touch him with

her small hand too

"Thank you, my dear," said Mr Grewgious "Ahem! Let's talk!"

"Do you always live here, sir?" asked Rosa

"Yes, my dear"

"And always alone?"

"Always alone, except that I have daily company in a gentleman by the name of Bazzard, my clerk"

"He doesn't live here?"

"No, he goes his way, after office hours In fact, he is off duty here, altogether, just at present, and a firm down-stairs, with which I have business relations, lend me a substitute But it would be extremely difficult to replace Mr. Bazzard"

"He must be very fond of you," said Rosa

"He bears up against it with commendable fortitude if he is," returned Mr Grewgious, after considering the matter "But I doubt if he is Not particularly so You see, he is discontented, poor fellow"

"Why isn't he contented?" was the natural inquiry
"Misplaced," said Mr Grewgious, with great mystery
Rosa's eyebrows resumed their inquisitive and perplexed
expression

"So misplaced," Mr Grewgious went on, "that I feel constantly apologetic towards him. And he feels (though he doesn't mention it) that I have reason to be "

Mr Grewgious had by this time grown so very mysterious, that Rosa did not know how to go on While she was thinking about it Mr Grewgious suddenly jerked out

of himself for the second time-

"Let's talk We were speaking of Mr Bazzard It's a secret, and moreover it is Mr Bazzard's secret, but the sweet presence at my table makes me so unusually expansive, that I feel I must impart it in inviolable confidence What do you think Mr Bazzard has done?"

"Oh, dear!" cried Rosa, drawing her chair a little nearer, and her mind reverting to Jasper, "nothing dreadful, I

hope?"

"He has written a play," said Mr Grewgious, in a solemn whisper "A tragedy"

Rosa seemed much relieved

"And nobody," pursued Mr Grewgious in the same tone, will hear, on any account whatever, of bringing it out"

Rosa looked reflective, and nodded her head slowly, as who should say, "Such things are, and why are they!"

"Now, you know," said Mr Grewgious, "I couldn't

write a play "

"Not a bad one, sir?" said Rosa, innocently, with her

eyebrows again in action

"No If I was under sentence of decapitation, and was about to be instantly decapitated, and an express arrived with a pardon for the condemned convict Grewgious if he wrote a play, I should be under the necessity of resuming the block, and begging the executioner to proceed to extremities,—meaning," said Mr Grewgious, passing his hand under his chin, "the singular number, and this extremity"

Rosa appeared to consider what she would do if the

awkward supposititious case were hers

"Consequently," said Mr Grewgious, "Mr Bazzard would have a sense of my inferiority to himself under any circumstances, but when I am his master, you know, the case is greatly aggravated"

Mr Grewgious shook his head seriously, as if he felt the offence to be a little too much, though of his own committing

"How came you to be his master, sir?" asked Rosa

"A question that naturally follows," said Mr Grewgious "Let's talk Mr Bazzard's father, being a Norfolk farmer, would have furiously laid about him with a flail, a pitchfork, and every agricultural implement available for assaulting purposes, on the slightest hint of his son's having written a play So the son, bringing to me the father's rent (which I receive), imparted his secret, and pointed out that he was determined to pursue his genius, and that it would put him in peril of starvation, and that he was not formed for it"

"For pursuing his genius, sir?"

"No, my deal," said Mr Grewgious, "for starvation It was impossible to deny the position, that Mr Bazzard was not formed to be starved, and Mr Bazzard then pointed out that it was desirable that I should stand between him and a fate so perfectly unsuited to his formation. In that way Mr Bazzard became my clerk, and he feels it very much"

"I am glad he is grateful," said Rosa

"I didn't quite mean that, my dear I mean, that he feels the degradation There are some other geniuses that Mr Bazzard has become acquainted with, who have also written tragedies, which likewise nobody will on any account whatever hear of bringing out, and these choice spirits dedicate their plays to one another in a highly panegyrical manner Mr Bazzard has been the subject of one of these dedications Now, you know, I never had a play dedicated to me!"

Rosa looked at him as if she would have liked him to be the recipient of a thousand dedications

"Which again, naturally, rubs against the grain of Mr Bazzard," said Mr Grewgious "He is very short with me sometimes, and then I feel that he is meditating, 'This blockhead is my master! A fellow who couldn't write a tragedy on pain of death, and who will never have one dedicated to him with the most complimentary congratu-

lations on the high position he has taken in the eyes of posterity!' Very trying, very trying However, in giving him directions, I reflect beforehand 'Perhaps he may not like this,' or 'He might take it ill if I asked that,' and so we get on very well Indeed, better than I could have expected "

"Is the tragedy named, sir?" asked Rosa
"Strictly between ourselves," answered Mr Grewgious, "it has a dreadfully appropriate name It is called The Thorn of Anxiety But Mr Bazzard hopes—and I hope -that it will come out at last "

It was not hard to divine that Mr Grewgious had related the Bazzard history thus fully, at least quite as much for the recreation of his ward's mind from the subject that had driven her there, as for the gratification of his own tendency to be social and communicative

"And now, my dear," he said at this point, "if you are not too tired to tell me more of what passed to-day-but only if you feel quite able—I should be glad to hear it I

may digest it the better, if I sleep on it to-night"

Rosa, composed now, gave him a faithful account of the interview Mr Grewgious often smoothed his head while it was in progress, and begged to be told a second time those parts which bore on Helena and Neville Rosa had finished, he sat grave, silent, and meditative for a while

"Clearly narrated," was his only remark at last, "and, I hope, clearly put away here," smoothing his head again "See, my dear," taking her to the open window, "where they live! The dark windows over yonder"

"I may go to Helena to-morrow?" asked Rosa

"I should like to sleep on that question to-night," he answered doubtfully "But let me take you to your own

rest, for you must need it "

With that Mr Grewgious helped her to get her hat on again, and hung upon his arm the very little bag that was of no earthly use, and led her by the hand (with a certain stately awkwardness, as if he were going to walk a minuet) across Holborn, and into Furnival's Inn At the hotel door he confided her to the Unlimited head chambermaid,

and said that while she went up to see her room, he would remain below, in case she should wish it exchanged for another, or should find that there was anything she wanted

Rosa's room was airy, clean, comfortable, almost gay. The Unlimited had laid in everything omitted from the very little bag (that is to say, everything she could possibly need), and Rosa tripped down the great many stairs again, to thank her guardian for his thoughtful and aftectionate care of her

"Not at all, my dear," said Mr Grewgious, infinitely gratified, "it is I who thank you for your charming confidence and for your charming company. Your breakfast will be provided for you in a neat, compact, and graceful little sitting-room (appropriate to your figure), and I will come to you at ten o'clock in the morning. I hope you don't feel very strange indeed, in this strange place."

"Oh no, I feel so safe!"

"Yes, you may be sure that the stairs are fire-proof," said Mr Grewgious, "and that any outbreak of the devouring element would be perceived and suppressed by the watchman"

"I did not mean that," Rosa replied "I mean, I feel so safe from him"

"There is a stout gate of iron bars to keep him out," said Mr Grewgious, smiling, "and Furnival's is fire-proof, and specially watched and lighted, and I live over the way!" In the stoutness of his knight-errantry, he seemed to think the last-named protection all-sufficient. In the same spirit he said to the gate-porter as he went out, "If some one staying in the hotel should wish to send across the road to me in the night, a crown will be ready for the messenger." In the same spirit, he walked up and down outside the iron gate for the best part of an hour, with some solicitude, occasionally looking in between the bars, as if he had laid a dove in a high roost in a cage of lions, and had it on his mind that she might tumble out

CHAPTER XXI

A RECOGNITION

Nothing occurred in the night to flutter the tired dove, and the dove arose refreshed With Mr Grewgious, when the clock struck ten in the morning, came Mr Crisparkle, who had come at one plunge out of the river at Cloisterham

"Miss Twinkleton was so uneasy, Miss Rosa," he explained to her, "and came round to Ma and me with your note, in such a state of wonder, that, to quiet her, I volunteered on this service by the very first train to be caught in the morning I wished at the time that you had come to me, but now I think it best that you did as you did, and came to your guardian"

"I did think of you," Rosa told him, "but Minor Canon Cornel was so near him——"

"I understand It was quite natural"

"I have told Mr Crisparkle," said Mr Grewgious, "all that you told me last night, my dear Of course I should have written it to him immediately, but his coming was most opportune And it was particularly kind of him to come for he had but just gone "
"Have you settled," asked Rosa, appealing to them both, "what is to be done for Helena and her brother?"

"Why, really," said Mr Crisparkle, "I am in great perplexity If even Mr Grewgious, whose head is much longer than mine, and who is a whole night's cogitation in

advance of me, is undecided, what must I be!"

The Unlimited here put her head in at the door-after having rapped, and been authorized to present herselfannouncing that a gentleman wished for a word with another gentleman named Crisparkle, if any such gentleman were there If no such gentleman were there, he begged pardon for being mistaken

"Such a gentleman is here," said Mr Crisparkle, "but

is engaged just now"

"Is it a dark gentleman?" interposed Rosa, retreating on her guardian

"No, Miss, more of a brown gentleman"

"You are sure not with black hair?" asked Rosa, tak-

ing courage

"Quite sure of that, Miss Brown hair and blue eyes" "Perhaps," hinted Mr Grewgious, with habitual caution, "it might be well to see him, reverend sir, if you don't object. When one is in a difficulty or at a loss one never knows in what direction a way out may chance to open. It is a business principle of mine, in such a case, not to close up any direction, but to keep an eye on every direction that may present itself. I could relate an anecdote in point, but that it would be premature."

"If Miss Rosa will allow me, then? Let the gentleman

come in," said Mr Crisparkle

The gentleman came in, apologized, with a frank but modest grace, for not finding Mr Crisparkle alone, turned to Mr Crisparkle, and smilingly asked the unexpected question "Who am I?"

"You are the gentleman I saw smoking under the trees

in Staple Inn, a few minutes ago"

"True There I saw you Who else am I?"

Mr Crisparkle concentrated his attention on a handsome face, much sunburnt, and the ghost of some departed boy seemed to rise, gradually and dimly, in the room

The gentleman saw a struggling recollection lighten up the Minor Canon's features, and smiling again, said "What will you have for breakfast this morning? You are out of jam"

"Wait a moment!" cried Mr Crisparkle, raising his

right hand "Give me another instant! Tartar!"

The two shook hands with the greatest heartiness, and then went the wonderful length—for Englishmen—of laying their hands each on the other's shoulders, and looking joyfully each into the other's face

"My old fag!" said Mr Crisparkle "My old master!" said Mr Tartar

"You saved me from drowning!" said Mr Crisparkle

"After which you took to swimming, you know!" said Mr Tartar

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"God bless my soul!" said Mr Crisparkle

"Amen!" said Mr Tartar

And then they fell to shaking hands most heartily again "Imagine," exclaimed Mr Crisparkle, with glistening eyes "Miss Rosa Bud and Mr Grewgious, imagine Mr Tartar, when he was the smallest of juniors, diving for me, catching me, a big heavy senior, by the hair of the head, and striking out for the shore with me like a water-giant!"

"Imagine my not letting him sink, as I was his fag!" said Mr Tartar "But the truth being that he was my best protector and friend, and did me more good than all the masters put together, an irrational impulse seized me

to pick him up, or go down with him "

"Hem! Permit me, sir, to have the honour," said Mr Grewgious, advancing with extended hand, "for an honour I truly esteem it I am proud to make your acquaintance I hope you didn't take cold I hope you were not inconvenienced by swallowing too much water How have you been since?"

It was by no means apparent that Mr Grewgious knew what he said, though it was very apparent that he meant

to say something highly friendly and appreciative

If Heaven, Rosa thought, had but sent such courage and skill to her poor mother's aid! And he to have been

so slight and young then!

"I don't wish to be complimented upon it, I thank you, but I think I have an idea," Mr Grewgious announced, after taking a jog-trot or two across the room, so unexpected and unaccountable that they all stared at him, doubtful whether he was choking or had the cramp—"I think I have an idea I believe I have had the pleasure of seeing Mr Tartar's name as tenant of the top set in the house next the top set in the corner?"

"Yes, sır," returned Mr Tartar "You are right so far"

"I am right so far," said Mr Grewgious "Tick that off," which he did, with his right thumb on his left "Might you happen to know the name of your neighbour in the top set on the other side of the party-wall?" coming very close to Mr Tartar. to lose nothing of his face, in his shortness of sight

"Landless"

"Tick that off," said Mr Grewgious, taking another trot, and then coming back "No personal knowledge, I suppose, sir?"

"Slight, but some"

"Tick that off," said Mr Grewgious, taking another trot, and again coming back "Nature of knowledge, Mr Tartar?"

"I thought he seemed to be a young fellow in a poor way, and I asked his leave—only within a day or so—to share my flowers up there with him, that is to say, to extend my flower-garden to his windows"

"Would you have the kindness to take seats?" said Mr

Grewgious "I have an idea!"

They complied, Mr Tartar none the less readily, for being all abroad, and Mr Grewgious, seated in the centre, with his hands upon his knees, thus stated his idea, with his usual manner of having got the statement by heart

"I cannot as yet make up my mind whether it is prudent to hold open communication under present circumstances, and on the part of the fair member of the present company, with Mr Neville or Miss Helena I have reason to know that a local friend of ours (on whom I beg to bestow a passing but a hearty malediction, with the kind permission of my reverend friend) sneaks to and fro. and dodges up and down When not doing so himself, he may have some informant skulking about, in the person of a watchman, porter, or such-like hanger-on of Staple On the other hand Miss Rosa very naturally wishes to see her friend Miss Helena, and it would seem important that at least Miss Helena (if not her brother too, through her) should privately know from Miss Rosa's lips what has occurred, and what has been threatened Am I agreed with generally in the views I take?"

"I entirely coincide with them," said Mr Crisparkle,

who had been very attentive.

"As I have no doubt I should," added Mr. Tartar,

smiling, "if I understood them"

"Fair and softly, sir," said Mr Grewgious, "we shall fully confide in you directly, if you will favour us with your

permission Now, if our local friend should have any informant on the spot, it is tolerably clear that such informant can only be set to watch the chambers in the occupation of Mr Neville He reporting, to our local friend, who comes and goes there, our local friend would supply for himself, from his own previous knowledge, the identity of the parties Nobody can be set to watch all Staple, or to concern himself with comers and goers to other sets of chambers unless, indeed, mine"

"I begin to understand to what you tend," said Mr Crisparkle, "and highly approve of your caution"

"I needn't repeat that I know nothing yet of the why and wherefore," said Mr Tartar, "but I also understand to what you tend, so let me say at once that my chambers are freely at your disposal"

"There!" cried Mr Grewgious, smoothing his head triumphantly, "now we have all got the idea You have

ıt, my dear ? "

"I think I have," said Rosa, blushing a little as Mr

Tartar looked quickly towards her

"You see, you go over to Staple with Mr Crisparkle and Mr Tartar," said Mr Grewgious, "I going in and out, and out and in alone, in my usual way, you go up with those gentlemen to M1 Tartar's rooms, you look into Mr Tartar's flower-garden, you wait for Miss Helena's appearance there, or you signify to Miss Helena that you are close by, and you communicate with her freely, and no spy can be the wiser"

"I am very much afraid I shall be--"

"Be what, my dear?" asked Mr Grewgious, as she hesitated "Not frightened?"

"No, not that," said Rosa, shyly, "in Mr Tartar's way We seem to be appropriating Mr Tartar's residence so very coolly"

"I protest to you," returned that gentleman, "that I shall think the better of it for evermore, if your voice sounds in

it only once "

Rosa, not quite knowing what to say about that, cast down her eyes, and turning to Mr Grewgious, dutifully asked if she should put her hat on? Mr Grewgious being of opinion that she could not do better, she withdrew for the purpose Mr Crisparkle took the opportunity of giving Mr Tartar a summary of the distresses of Neville and his sister, the opportunity was quite long enough, as the hat happened to require a little extra fitting on

Mr Tartar gave his arm to Rosa, and Mr Crisparkle

walked detached, in front

"Poor, poor Eddy!" thought Rosa, as they went along Mr Tartar waved his right hand as he bent his head down over Rosa, talking in an animated way

"It was not so powerful or sun-browned when it saved Mr Crisparkle," thought Rosa, glancing at it, "but it must have been very steady and determined even then"

Mr Tartar told her he had been a sailor, roving every-

where for years and years

'When are you going to sea again?" asked Rosa

"Never!"

Rosa wondered what the girls would say if they could see her crossing the wide street on the sailor's arm. And she fancied that the passers-by must think her very little and very helpless, contrasted with the strong figure that could have caught her up and carried her out of any danger, miles and miles without resting.

She was thinking further, that his far-seeing blue eyes looked as if they had been used to watch danger afar off, and to watch it without flinching, drawing nearer and nearer when, happening to raise her own eyes, she found

that he seemed to be thinking something about them

This a little confused Rosebud, and may account for her never afterwards quite knowing how she ascended (with his help) to his garden in the air, and seemed to get into a marvellous country that came into sudden bloom like the country on the summit of the magic bean-stalk May it flourish for ever!

CHAPTER XXII

A GRITTY STATE OF THINGS COMES ON.

MR TARTAR'S chambers were the neatest, the cleanest. and the best ordered chambers ever seen under the sun. moon, and stars The floors were scrubbed to that extent. that you might have supposed the London blacks emancipated for ever, and gone out of the land for good inch of brass-work in Mr Tartar's possession was polished and burnished till it shone like a brazen mirror No speck. nor spot, nor spatter soiled the purity of any of Mr Tartar's household gods, large, small, or middle-sized His sittingroom was like the admiral's cabin, his bath-room was like a dairy, his sleeping-chamber, fitted all about with lockers and drawers, was like a seedsman's shop, and his nicelybalanced cot just stirred in the midst, as if it breathed Everything belonging to Mr Tartar had quarters of its own assigned to it his maps and charts had their quarters. his books had theirs, his brushes had theirs, his boots had theirs, his clothes had theirs, his case-bottles had theirs, his telescopes and other instruments had theirs Everything was readily accessible Shelf, bracket, locker, hook, and drawer were equally within reach, and were equally contrived with a view to avoid waste of room, and providing some snug inches of stowage for something that would have exactly fitted nowhere else His gleaming little service of plate was so arranged upon his sideboard as that a slack salt-spoon would have instantly betrayed itself, his toilet implements were so arranged upon his dressing-table as that a toothpick of slovenly deportment could have been reported at a glance So with the curiosities he had brought home from various voyages Stuffed, dried, repolished, or otherwise preserved, according to their kind, birds, fishes, reptiles, arms, articles of dress, shells, seaweeds, grasses, or memorials of coral reef, each was displayed in its especial place, and each could have been displayed in no better place Paint and varnish seemed to be kept somewhere out of sight, in constant readiness to obliterate stray fingermarks wherever any might become perceptible in Mr Tartar's chambers No man-of-war was ever kept more spick and span from careless touch On this bright summer day, a neat awning was rigged over Mr Tartar's flower-garden as only a sailor could rig it, and there was a sea-going air upon the whole effect, so delightfully complete, that the flower-garden might have appertained to stern-windows affoat, and the whole concern might have bowled away gallantly with all on board, if Mr Tartar had only clapped to his lips the speaking-trumpet that was slung in a corner, and given hoarse orders to heave the anchor up, look alive there, men, and get all sail upon her!

Mr Tartar doing the honours of this gallant craft was of a piece with the rest. When a man rides an amiable hobby that shies at nothing and kicks nobody, it is only agreeable to find him riding it with a humorous sense of the droll side of the creature. When the man is a cordial and an earnest man by nature, and withal is perfectly fresh and genuine, it may be doubted whether he is ever seen to greater advantage than at such a time So Rosa would have naturally thought (even if she hadn't been conducted over the ship with all the homage due to the First Lady of the Admiralty, or First Fairy of the Sea), that it was charming to see and hear Mr Tartar half laughing at, and half rejoicing in, his various contrivances So Rosa would have naturally thought, anyhow, that the sunburnt sailor showed to great advantage when, the inspection finished, he delicately withdrew out of his admiral's cabin, beseeching her to consider herself its Queen, and waving her free of his flower-garden with the hand that had had Mr Crisparkle's life in it

"Helena! Helena Landless! Are you there?"
"Who speaks to me? Not Rosa?" Then a second handsome face appearing

"Yes, my darling!"

"Why, how did you come here, dearest?"

"I-I don't quite know," said Rosa, with a blush; "unless I am dreaming!"

the other flowers. Are blushes among the fruits of the country of the magic bean-stalk?

"I am not dreaming," said Helena, smiling "I should take more for granted if I were How do we come to-

gether-or so near together-so very unexpectedly?"

Unexpectedly indeed, among the dingy gables and chimney-pots of P J T's connection, and the flowers that had sprung from the salt sea But Rosa, waking, told in a hurry how they came to be together, and all the why and wherefore of that matter

"And Mr Crisparkle is here," said Rosa, in rapid conclusion, "and, could you believe it? long ago he saved

his life!"

"I could believe any such thing of Mr Crisparkle," returned Helena, with a mantling face

(More blushes in the bean-stalk country!)

"Yes, but it wasn't Mr Crisparkle," said Rosa, quickly putting in the correction

"I don't understand, love"

"It was very nice of Mr Crisparkle to be saved," said Rosa, "and he couldn't have shown his high opinion of Mr Tartar more expressively But it was Mr Tartar who saved him"

Helena's dark eyes looked very earnestly at the bright face among the leaves, and she asked in a slower and more thoughtful tone —

"Is Mr Tartar with you now, dear?"

"No, because he has given up his rooms to me—to us, I mean It is such a beautiful place!"

"Is it?"

"It is like the inside of the most exquisite ship that ever sailed It is like—it is like—"

"Like a dream?" suggested Helena

Rosa answered with a little nod, and smelled the flowers Helena resumed, after a short pause of silence, during which she seemed (or it was Rosa's fancy) to compassionate somebody "My poor Neville is reading in his own room, the sun being so very bright on this side just now. I think he had better not know that you are so near"

"Oh, I think so, too," cried Rosa, very readily,

I suppose," pursued Helena, doubtfully, "that he must know by-and-by all you have told me, but I am not sure Ask Mr Crisparkle's advice, my darling Ask him whether I may tell Neville as much or as little of what you have told me as I think best"

Rosa subsided into her state-cabin, and 'propounded the question The Minor Canon was for the free exercise of

Ĥelena's judgment

"I thank him very much," said Helena, when Rosa emerged again with her report "Ask him whether it would be best to wait until any more maligning and pursuing of Neville on the part of this wretch shall disclose itself, or to try to anticipate it I mean, so far as to find

out whether any such goes on darkly about us?"

The Minor Canon found this point so difficult to give a confident opinion on, that, after two or three attempts and failures, he suggested a reference to Mr Grewgious Helena acquiescing, he betook himself (with a most successful assumption of lounging indifference) across the quadrangle to P J T's, and stated it Mr Grewgious held decidedly to the general principle that if you could steal a march upon a brigand or a wild beast you had better do it, and he also held decidedly to the special case, that John Jasper was a brigand and a wild beast in combination

Thus advised, Mr Crisparkle came back again and reported to Rosa, who in her turn reported to Helena She now steadily pursuing her train of thought at her window, considered thereupon

"We may count on M1 Tartar's readiness to help us,

Rosa?" she inquired

Oh, yes! Rosa shyly thought so Oh yes, Rosa shyly believed she could almost answer for it But should she ask Mr Crisparkle? "I think your authority on the point as good as his, my dear," said Helena, sedately, "and you needn't disappear again for that" Odd of Helena!

"You see, Neville," Helena pursued after more reflection, "knows no one else here he has not so much as exchanged a word with any one else here If Mr Tartar would call to see him openly and often, if he would spare

a minute for the purpose, frequently, if he would even do so, almost daily, something might come of it"

"Something might come of it, dear?" repeated Rosa, surveying her friend's beauty with a highly perplexed

face "Something might?"

"If Neville's movements are really watched, and if the purpose really is to isolate him from all friends and acquaintance and wear his daily life out grain by grain (which would seem to be the threat to you), does it not appear likely" said Helena, "that his enemy would in some way communicate with Mr Tartar to warn him off from Neville? In which case, we might not only know the fact, but might know from Mr Tartar what the terms of the communication were"

"I see!" cried Rosa And immediately darted into

her state-cabin again

Presently her pretty face reappeared, with greatly heightened colour, and she said that she had told Mr Crisparkle, and that Mr Crisparkle had fetched in Mr Tartar, and that Mr Tartar—"who is waiting now, in case you want him," added Rosa, with a half look back, and in not a little confusion between the inside of the state-cabin and out—had declared his readiness to act as she had suggested, and to enter on his task that very day

"I thank him from my heart," said Helena "Pray

tell him so "

Again not a little confused between the Flower-garden and the Cabin, Rosa dipped in with her message, and dipped out again with more assurances from Mr Tartar, and stood wavering in a divided state between Helena and him, which proved that confusion is not always necessarily awkward, but may sometimes present a very pleasant appearance

"And now, darling," said Helena, "we will be mindful of the caution that has restricted us to this interview for the present, and will part. I hear Neville moving too.

Are you going back?"

"Yes"

[&]quot;To Miss Twinkleton's?" asked Rosa.

"Oh, I could never go there any more, I couldn't indeed, after that dreadful interview!" said Rosa

"Then where are you going, pretty one?"

"Now I come to think of it, I don't know," said Rosa
"I have settled nothing at all yet, but my guardian will
take care of me Don't be uneasy, dear • I shall be sure
to be somewhere"

(It did seem likely)

"And I shall hear of my Rosebud from Mr Tartar?"

inquired Helena

"Yes, I suppose so, from——" Rosa looked back again in a flutter, instead of supplying the name "But tell me one thing before we part, dearest Helena me that you are sure, sure, I couldn't help it"

"Help it, love?"

"Help making him malicious and revengeful I

couldn't hold any terms with him, could I?"

"You know how I love you, darling," answered Helena, with indignation, "but I would sooner see you dead at his wicked feet"

"That's a great comfort to me! And you will tell your poor brother so, won't you? And you will give him my remembrance and my sympathy? And you will ask him not to hate me?"

With a mournful shake of the head, as if that would be quite a superfluous entreaty, Helena lovingly kissed her two hands to her friend, and her friend's two hands were kissed to her, and then she saw a third hand (a brown one) appear among the flowers and leaves, and help her

friend out of sight

The refection that Mr Tartar produced in the Admiral's Cabin by merely touching the spring knob of a locker and the handle of a drawer, was a dazzling enchanted repast Wonderful macaroons, glittering liqueurs, magically-preserved tropical spices, and jellies of celestial tropical fruits, displayed themselves profusely at an instant's notice But Mr Tartar could not make time stand still, and time, with his hardhearted fleetness, strode on so fast, that Rosa was obliged to come down from the bean-stalk country to earth and her guardian's chambers

"And now, my dear," said Mr Grewgious, "what is to be done next? To put the same thought in another form, what is to be done with you?"

Rosa could only look apologetically sensible of being very much in her own way and in everybody else's Some passing idea of living, fireproof, up a good many stairs in Furnival's Inn for the rest of her life, was the only thing in the nature of a plan that occurred to her

"It has come into my thoughts," said Mr Grewgious, "that as the respected lady, Miss Twinkleton, occasionally repairs to London in the recess, with the view of extending her connection, and being available for interviews with metropolitan parents, if any—whether, until we have time in which to turn ourselves round, we might invite Miss Twinkleton to come and stay with you for a month?"

"Stay where, sır?"

"Whether," explained Mr Grewgious, "we might take a furnished lodging in town for a month, and invite Miss Twinkleton to assume that charge of you in it for that period?"

"And afterwards?" hinted Rosa

"And afterwards," said Mr Grewgious, "we should be no worse off than we are now"

"I think that might smooth the way," assented Rosa

"Then let us," said Mr Grewgious, rising, "go and look for a furnished lodging. Nothing could be more acceptable to me than the sweet presence of last evening, for all the remaining evenings of my existence, but these are not fit surroundings for a young lady. Let us set out in quest of adventures, and look for a furnished lodging. In the meantime, Mr Crisparkle here, about to return home immediately, will no doubt kindly see Miss Twinkleton, and invite that lady to co-operate in our plan."

Mr Crisparkle, willingly accepting the commission, took his departure, Mr Grewgious and his ward set forth on

their expedition

As Mr Grewgious's idea of looking at a furnished lodging was to get on the opposite side of the street to a house with a suitable bill in the window, and stare at it, and then work his way tortuously to the back of the house, and

stare at that, and then not go in, but make similar trials of another house, with the same result, their progress was but slow. At length he bethought himself of a widowed cousin, divers times removed, of Mr Bazzaids, who had once solicited his influence in the lodger world, and who lived in Southampton Street Bloomsbury Square. This lady's name, stated in uncompromising capitals of considerable size on a brass door-plate, and yet not lucidly as to sex or condition, was BILLICKIN

Personal faintness, and an overpowering personal candour, were the distinguishing features of Mrs Billickin's organization. She came languishing out of her own exclusive back parlour, with the air of having been expressly brought-to for the purpose, from an accumulation of several swoons.

"I hope I see you well, sir" said Mrs Billickin, recognizing her visitor with a bend

"Thank you, quite well And you, ma'am?" returned

Mr Grewgious

"I am as well," said Mrs Billickin, becoming aspirational with excess of faintness, "as I hever ham"

"My ward and an elderly lady," said Mr Grewgious, "wish to find a genteel lodging for a month or so Have you any apartments available, ma'am?"

"Mr Grewgious," returned Mrs Billickin, "I will not deceive you, far from it I have apartments available"

This with the air of adding "Convey me to the stake,

if you will, but while I live, I will be candid"

"And now, what apartments, ma'am' asked Mr Grewgious, cosily To tame a certain severity apparent on the

part of Mrs Billickin

"There is this sitting-room—which, call it what you will, it is the front parlour, Miss," said Mrs Billickin, impressing Rosa into the conversation "the back parlour being what I cling to and never part with, and there is two bedrooms at the top of the 'ouse with gas laid on I do not tell you that your bedroom floors is firm, for firm they are not The gas-fitter himself allowed, that to make a firm job, he must go right under your jistes, and it were not worth the outlay as a yearly tenant so to do The

piping is carried above your jistes, and it is best that it should be made known to you"

Mr Grewgious and Rosa exchanged looks of some dismay, though they had not the least idea what latent horrors this carriage of the piping might involve. Mrs Billickin put her hand to her heart, as having eased it of a load

"Well! The roof is all right, no doubt," said Mr

Grewgious, plucking up a little

"Mr Grewgious," returned Mrs Billickin, "if I was to tell you, sir, that to have nothink above you is to have a floor above you, I should put a deception upon you which I will not do No, sir Your slates will rattle loose at that elewation in windy weather, do your utmost, best or worst! I defy you, sir, be you what you may, to keep your slates tight, try how you can" Here Mrs Billickin, having been warm with Mr Grewgious, cooled a little, not to abuse the moral power she held over him "Consequent," proceeded Mrs Billickin, more mildly, but still firmly in her incorruptible candour "consequent it would be worse than of no use for me to trapse and travel up to the top of the 'ouse with you, and for you to say, 'Mrs Billickin, what stain do I notice in the ceiling, for a stain I do consider it?' and for me to answer, 'I do not understand you, sir.' No, sir, I will not be so underhand do understand you before you pint it out It is the wet, sir It do come in, and it do not come in You may lay dry there half your lifetime, but the time will come, and it is best that you should know it, when a dripping sop would be no name for you"

Mr Grewgious looked much disgraced by being pre-

figured in this pickle

"Have you any other apartments, ma'am?" he asked.
"Mr Grewgious," returned Mrs Billickin, with much solemnity, "I have. You ask me have I, and my open and my honest answer air, I have The first and second floors is wacant, and sweet rooms"

"Come, come! There's nothing against them," said

Mr Grewgious, comforting himself

"Mr Grewgious," replied Mrs. Billickin, "pardon me,

there is the stairs Unless your mind is prepared for the stairs, it will lead to inevitable disappointment. You cannot, Miss," said Mrs. Billickin, addressing Rosa reproachfully, "place a first floor, and far less a second, on the level footing of a parlour. No, you cannot do it, Miss, it is beyond your power, and wherefore try?"

Mrs Billickin put it very feelingly, as if Rosa had shown a headstrong determination to hold the untenable position

"Can we see these rooms, ma'am?" inquired her guardian

"Mr Grewgious," returned Mrs Billickin, "you can I

will not disguise it from you, sir, you can"

Mrs Billickin then sent into her back-parlour for her shawl (it being a state fiction, dating from immemorial antiquity, that she could never go anywhere without being wrapped up), and, having been enrolled by her attendant, led the way She made various genteel pauses on the stairs for breath, and clutched at her heart in the drawing-room as if it had very nearly got loose, and she had caught it in the act of taking wing

"And the second floor " said Mr Grewgious, on finding

the first satisfactory.

"Mr Grewgious," replied Mrs Billickin, turning upon him with ceremony, as if the time had now come when a distinct understanding on a difficult point must be arrived at, and a solemn confidence established, "the second floor is over this"

"Can we see that too, ma'am?"

"Yes, sir," returned Mrs Billickin, "it is open as the

day"

That also proving satisfactory, Mr Grewgious retired into a window with Rosa for a few words of consultation, and then asking for pen and ink, sketched out a line or two of agreement. In the meantime Mrs Billickin took a seat, and delivered a kind of Index to, or Abstract of, the general question

"Five-and-forty shillings per week by the month certain at the time of year," said Mrs Billickin, "is only reasonable to both parties It is not Bond Street nor yet St James's Palace, but it is not pretended that it is. Neither is it attempted to be denied—for why should it '—that the Arching leads to a mews. Mewses must exist. Respecting attendance, two is kep', at liberal wages. Words has arisen as to tradesmen, but dirty shoes on fresh hearth-stoning was attributable, and no wish for a commission on your orders. Coals is either by the fire, or per the scuttle." She emphasized the prepositions as marking a subtle but immense difference. 'Dogs is not viewed with faviour Besides litter, they gets stole, and sharing suspicions is apt to creep in, and impleasantness takes place."

By this time Mr Grewgious had his agreement-lines, and his earnest-money, ready "I have signed it for the ladies, ma'am," he said, 'and you'll have the goodness to sign it for yourself, Christian and Surname, there, if you please"

for yourself, Christian and Surname, there, if you please"
"Mr Grewgious," said Mrs Billickin in a new burst
of candour, "no, sir! You must excuse the Christian

name."

Mr Grewgious stared at her

"The door-plate is used as a protection," said Mrs Billickin, "and acts as such, and go from it I will not"

Mr Grewgious stared at Rosa

"No, Mr Grewgious, you must excuse me So long as this 'ouse is known indefinite as Billickin's, and so long as it is a doubt with the rift-raff where Billickin may be hidin', near the street-door or down the airy, and what his weight and size, so long I feel safe But commit myself to a solitary female statement, no, Miss! Nor would you for a moment wish," said Mrs Billickin, with a strong sense of injury, "to take that advantage of your sex, if you were not brought to it by inconsiderate example"

Rosa reddening as if she had made some most disgraceful attempt to overreach the good lady, besought Mr Grewgious to rest content with any signature And accordingly, in a baronial way, the sign-manual BILLICKIN got appended to the document

Details were then settled for taking possession on the next day but one, when Miss Twinkleton might be reasonably expected, and Rosa went back to Furnival's Inn, on her guardian's arm

Behold Mr Tartar walking up and down Furnival's Inn.

checking himself when he saw them coming, and advancing towards them!

"It occurred to me," hinted Mr Tartar, "that we might go up the river, the weather being so delicious and the tide serving I have a boat of my own at the Temple Stairs"

'I have not been up the river for this many a day,"

said Mr Grewgious, tempted

"I was never up the river," added Rosa

Within half an hour they were setting this matter right by going up the river The tide was running with them, the afternoon was charming Mr Tartar's boat was perfect Mr Tartar and Lobley (Mr Tartar s man) pulled a pair of oars Mr Tartar had a yacht, it seemed, lying somewhere down by Greenhithe, and Mr Tartar's man had charge of this yacht, and was detached upon his present service He was a jolly favoured man, with tawny hair and whiskers, and a big red face. He was the dead image of the sun in old wood-cuts, his hair and whiskers answering for rays all around him Resplendent in the bow of the boat, he was a shining sight, with a man-of-war's man's shirt on-or oft, according to opinion-and his arms and breast tattooed all sorts of patterns Lobley seemed to take it easily, and so did Mr Tartar, yet their oars bent as they pulled, and the boat bounded under them Mr Tartar talked as if he were doing nothing, to Rosa who was really doing nothing, and to Mr Grewgious who was doing this much that he steered all wrong, but what did that matter, when a turn of Mr Tartar's skilful wrist, or a mere grin of Mr Lobley's over the bow, put all to rights! The tide bore them on in the gayest and most sparkling manner, until they stopped to dine in some everlastingly-green garden, needing no matter-of-fact identification here, and then the tide obligingly turned—being devoted to that party alone for that day and as they floated idly along some osier-beds, Rosa tried what she could do in the rowing way, and came oft splendidly, being much assisted, and Mr Grewgious tried what he could do, and came off on his back, doubled up with an oar under his chin, being not assisted at all Then there was an interval of rest under boughs (such rest!) what time Mr Lobley mopped, and

arranging cushions, stretchers, and the like, danced the tight-rope the whole length of the boat like a man to whom shoes were a superstition and stockings slavery, and then came the sweet return among delicious odours of limes in bloom, and musical ripplings, and, all too soon, the great black city cast its shadow on the waters, and its dark bridges spanned them as death spans life and the everlastingly-green garden seemed to be left for everlasting, unregainable and far away

"Cannot people get through life without gritty stages, I wonder?" Rosa thought next day, when the town was very gritty again, and everything had a strange and an uncomfortable appearance of seeming to wait for something that wouldn't come No She began to think, that, now the Cloisterham school-days had glided past and gone, the gritty stages would begin to set in at intervals

and make themselves wearily known !

Yet what did Rosa expect? Did she expect Miss Twinkleton? Miss Twinkleton duly came Forth from her backparlour issued the Billickin to receive Miss Twinkleton, and War was in the Billickin's eye from that fell moment

Miss Twinkleton brought a quantity of luggage with her, having all Rosa's as well as her own. The Billickin took it ill that Miss Twinkleton's mind, being sorely disturbed by this luggage, failed to take in her personal identity with that clearness of perception which was due to its demands. Stateliness mounted her gloomy throne upon the Billickin's brow in consequence. And when Miss Twinkleton, in agitation taking stock of her trunks and packages, of which she had seventeen, particularly counted in the Billickin herself as number eleven, the B found it necessary to repudiate

"Things cannot too soon be put upon the footing," said she, with a candour so demonstrative as to be almost obtrusive, "that the person of the 'ouse is not a box, nor yet a bundle, nor a carpet-bag No, I am 'ily obleeged to you, Miss Twinkleton, nor yet a beggar"

This last disclaimer had reference to Miss Twinkleton's distractedly pressing two-and-sixpence on her, instead of the cabman.

Thus cast off, Miss Twinkleton wildly inquired, "which gentleman" was to be paid? There being two gentlemen in that position (Miss Twinkleton having arrived with two cabs), each gentleman on being paid held forth his two and-sixpence on the flat of his open hand, and, with a speechless stare and a dropped jaw, displayed his wrong to heaven and earth Terrified by this alarming spectacle, Miss Twinkleton placed another shilling in each hand, at the same time appealing to the law in flurried accents, and recounting her luggage this time with the two gentlemen in, who caused the total to come out complicated Meanwhile, the two gentlemen, each looking very hard at the last shilling grumblingly, as if it might become eighteenpence if he kept his eyes on it, descended the doorsteps, ascended their carriages, and drove away, leaving Miss Twinkleton on a bonnet-box, in tears

'Ihe Billickin beheld this manifestation of weakness without sympathy, and gave directions for "a young man to be got in" to wrestle with the luggage When that gladiator had disappeared from the arena, peace ensued,

and the new lodgers dined

But the Billickin had somehow come to the knowledge that Miss Twinkleton kept a school The leap from that knowledge to the inference that Miss Twinkleton set herself to teach her something, was easy "But you don't do it," soliloquized the Billickin, "I am not your pupil, whatever she," meaning Rosa, "may be, poor thing!"

Miss Twinkleton, on the other hand, having changed her dress and recovered her spirits, was animated by a bland desire to improve the occasion in all ways, and to be as serene a model as possible. In a happy compromise between her two states of existence, she had already become, with her workbasket before her, the equably vivacious companion with a slight judicious flavouring of information, when the Billickin announced herself

"I will not hide from you, ladies," said the B, enveloped in the shawl of state, "for it is not my character to hide neither my motives nor my actions, that I take the liberty to look in upon you to express a 'ope that your dinner was to your liking Though not Professed but

Plam, still her wages should be a sufficient object to her to stimilate to soar above mere roast and biled '

"We dined very well indeed," said Rosa, 'thank you" "Accustomed," said Miss Twinkleton with a gracious air, which to the jealous ears of the Billickin seemed to add "my good woman" -- accustomed to a liberal and nutritious, yet plain and salutary diet, we have found no reason to bemoan our absence from the ancient city, and the methodical household, in which the quiet routine of our lot has been hitherto cast "

"I did think it well to mention to my cook," observed the Billickin with a gush of candour, "which I 'ope you will agree with, Miss Twinkleton, was a right precaution, that the young lady being used to what we should consider here but poor diet, had better be brought forward by degrees For, a rush from scanty feeding to generous feeding, and from what you may call messing to what you may call method, do require a power of constitution which is not often found in youth, particular when undermined by boarding-school!"

It will be seen that the Billickin now openly pitted herself against Miss Twinkleton, as one whom she had fully ascertained to be her natural enemy

"Your remarks," returned Miss Twinkleton, from a remote moral eminence, "are well meant, I have no doubt, but you will permit me to observe that they develop a mistaken view of the subject, which can only be imputed to your extreme want of accurate information"

"My informiation," retorted the Billickin, throwing in an extra syllable for the sake of emphasis at once polite and powerful-"my informiation, Miss Twinkleton, were my own experience, which I believe is usually considered to be good guidance But whether so or not, I was put in youth to a very genteel boarding-school, the mistress being no less a lady than yourself, of about your own age or it may be some years younger, and a poorness of blood flowed from the table which has run through my life"

"Very likely," said Miss Twinkleton, still from her distant eminence, 'and very much to be deplored —Rosa,

my dear, how are you getting on with your work?"

"Miss Twinkleton," resumed the Billickin, in a courtly manner, "before retiring on the 'int, as a lady should, I wish to ask of yourself, as a lady, whether I am to consider that my words is doubted?"

"I am not aware on what ground you cherish such a supposition," began Miss Twinkleton, when the Billickin

neatly stopped her

"Do not, if you please, put suppositions betwixt my lips where none such have been imparted by myself. Your flow of words is great, Miss Twinkleton, and no doubt is expected from you by your pupils, and no doubt is considered worth the money. No doubt, I am sure. But not paying for flows of words, and not asking to be favoured with them here, I wish to repeat my question."

"If you refer to the poverty of your circulation," began Miss Twinkleton, when again the Billickin neatly stopped

her

"I have used no such expressions"

"If you refer, then, to the poorness of your blood—"
"Brought upon me," stipulated the Billickin, expressly,

at a boarding-school-"

"Then," resumed Miss Twinkleton, "all I can say is, that I am bound to believe, on your asseveration, that it is very poor indeed. I cannot forbear adding, that if that unfortunate circumstance influences your conversation, it is much to be lamented, and it is eminently desirable that your blood were richer—Rosa, my dear, how are you getting on with your work?"

"Hem! Before retiring, Miss," proclaimed the Billickin to Rosa, loftily cancelling Miss Twinkleton, "I should wish it to be understood between yourself and me that my transactions in future is with you alone I know no

elderly lady here, Miss, none older than yourself"

"A highly desirable arrangement Rosa, my dear,"

observed Miss Twinkleton

"It is not, Miss," said the Billickin, with a sarcastic smile, "that I possess the Mill I have heard of, in which old single ladies could be ground up young (what a gift it would be to some of us), but that I limit myself to you totally "

"When I have any desire to communicate a request to the person of the house, Rosa, my dear," observed Miss Twinkleton with majestic cheerfulness, "I will make it known to you, and you will kindly undertake, I am sure, that it is conveyed to the proper quarter"

"Good-evening, Miss," said the Billickin, at once affectionately and distantly "Being alone in my eyes, I wish you good-evening with best wishes, and do not find myself drove, I am truly 'appy to say, into expressing my contempt for an individual, unfortunately for yourself, belong-

ing to you"

The Billickin gracefully withdrew with this parting speech, and from that time Rosa occupied the restless position of shuttlecock between these two battledores Nothing could be done without a smart match being played out. Thus, on the daily-arising question of dinner, Miss Twinkleton would say, the three being present together—

"Perhaps, my love, you will consult with the person of the house, whether she can procure us a lamb's fry, or,

failing that, a roast fowl"

On which the Billickin would retort (Rosa not having spoken a word), "If you was better accustomed to butcher's meat, Miss, you would not, entertain the idea of a lamb's fry Firstly, because lambs has long been sheep, and secondly, because there is such things as killing-days, and there is not As to roast fowls, Miss, why you must be quite surfeited with roast fowls, letting alone your buying, when you market for yourself, the agedest of poultry with the scaliest of legs, quite as if you was accustomed to picking 'em out for cheapness Try a little inwention, Miss Use yourself to 'ousekeeping a bit Come now, think of somethink else"

To this encouragement, offered with the indulgent toleration of a wise and liberal expert, Miss Twinkleton would rejoin, reddening —

"Or, my dear, you might propose to the person of the

house a duck "

"Well, Miss!" the Billickin would exclaim (still no word being spoken by Rosa), "you do surprise me when you speak of ducks! Not to mention that they're getting out

of season and very dear, it really strikes to my heart to see you have a duck, for the breast, which is the only delicate cuts in a duck, always goes in a direction which I cannot imagine where, and your own plate comes down so miserably skin-and-bony! Try again, Miss Think more of yourself, and less of others A dish of sweetbreads now, or a bit of mutton Something at which you can get your equal chance "

Occasionally the game would wax very brisk indeed, and would be kept up with a smartness rendering such an encounter as this quite tame. But the Billickin almost invariably made by far the higher score, and would come in with side hits of the most unexpected and extraordinary

description, when she seemed without a chance

All this did not improve the gritty state of things in London, or the air that London had acquired in Rosa's eyes of waiting for something that never came Tired of working, and conversing with Miss Twinkleton, she suggested working and reading to which Miss Twinkleton readily assented, as an admirable reader, of tried powers But Rosa soon made the discovery that Miss Twinkleton didn't read fairly She cut the love-scenes, interpolated passages in praise of female celibacy, and was guilty of other glaring pious frauds As an instance in point, take the glowing passage "Ever dearest and best adored,said Edward, clasping the dear head to his breast, and drawing the silken hair through his caressing fingers, from which he suffered it to fall like golden rain,—ever dearest and best adored, let us fly from the unsympathetic world and the sterile coldness of the stony-hearted, to the rich warm Paradise of Trust and Love" Miss Twinkleton's fraudulent version tamely ran thus "Ever engaged to me with the consent of our parents on both sides, and the approbation of the silver-haired rector of the district,-said Edward, respectfully raising to his lips the taper fingers so skilful in embroidery, tambour, crochet, and other truly femmme arts,-let me call on thy papa ere to-morrow's dawn has sunk into the west, and propose a suburban establishment, lowly it may be, but within our means, where he will be always welcome as an evening guest, and where every

arrangement shall invest economy, and constant interchange of scholastic acquirements with the attributes of the minis-

tering angel to domestic bliss "

As the days crept on and nothing happened, the neighbours began to say that the pretty girl at Billickin's who looked so wistfilly and so much out of the gritty windows of the drawing-room, seemed to be losing her spirits. The pretty girl might have lost them but for the accident of lighting on some books of voyages and sea-adventure. As a compensation against their romance, Miss Twinkleton, reading aloud, made the most of all the latitudes and longitudes, bearings, winds, currents, offsets, and other statistics (which she felt to be none the less improving because they expressed nothing whatever to her), while Rosa, listening intently, made the most of what was nearest to her heart. So they both did better than before

CHAPTER XXIII

THE DAWN AGAIN

Although Mr Crisparkle and John Jasper met daily under the Cathedral roof, nothing at any time passed between them having reference to Edwin Drood, after the time, more than half a year gone by, when Jasper mutely showed the Minor Canon the conclusion and the resolution entered in his Diary. It is not likely that they ever met, though so often, without the thoughts of each reverting to the subject. It is not likely that they ever met, though so often, without a sensation on the part of each that the other was a perplexing secret to him. Jasper as the denouncer and pursuer of Neville Landless, and Mr Crisparkle as his consistent advocate and protector, must at least have stood sufficiently in opposition to have speculated with keen interest on the steadiness and next direction of the other's designs.

False pretence not being in the Minor Canon's nature, he doubtless displayed openly that he would at any time

have revived the subject, and even desired to discuss it. The determined reticence of Jasper, however, was not to be so approached. Impassive, moody, solitary, resolute, so concentrated on one idea, and on its attendant fixed purpose, that he would share it with no fellow-creature, he lived apart from human life. Constantly exercising an Art which brought him into mechanical harmony with others, and which could not have been pursued unless he and they had been in the nicest mechanical relations and unison, it is curious to consider that the spirit of the man was in moral accordance or interchange with nothing around him. This indeed he had confided to his lost nephew, before the occasion for his present inflexibility arose.

That he must know of Rosa's abrupt departure, and that he must divine its cause, was not to be doubted Did he suppose that he had terrified her into silence? or did he suppose that she had imparted to any one—to Mr Crisparkle, himself, for instance—the particulars of his last interview with her? Mr Crisparkle could not determine this in his mind. He could not but admit, however, as a just man, that it was not, of itself, a crime to fall in love with Rosa, any more than it was a crime to offer to set love above revenge.

The dreadful suspicion of Jasper, which Rosa was so shocked to have received into her imagination, appeared to have no harbour in Mr Crisparkle's. If it ever haunted Helena's thoughts or Neville's neither gave it one spoken word of utterance. Mr Grewgious took no pains to conceal his implacable dislike of Jasper, yet he never referred it, however distantly, to such a source. But he was a reticent as well as an eccentric man, and he made no mention of a certain evening when he warmed his hands at the gatehouse fire, and looked steadily down upon a certain heap of torn and miry clothes upon the floor.

Drowsy Cloisterham, whenever it awoke to a passing reconsideration of a story above six months old and dismissed by the bench of magistrates, was pretty equally divided in opinion whether John Jasper's beloved nephew had been killed by his treacherously passionate rival, or in an open struggle, or had, for his own purposes, spirited himsen away. It then lifted up its head to notice that the bereaved Jasper was still ever devoted to discovery and revenge, and then dozed off again. This was the condition of matters, all round, at the period to which the present history has now attained.

The Cathedral doors have closed for the night, and the Choir-Master, on a short leave of absence for two or three services, sets his face towards London He travels thither by the means by which Rosa travelled, and arrives, as

Rosa arrived, on a hot, dusty evening

His travelling baggage is easily carried in his hand, and he repairs with it, on foot, to a hybrid hotel in a little square behind Aldersgate Street, near the General Post Office It is hotel, boarding-house, or lodging-house, at its visitor's option. It announces itself, in the new Railway Advertisers, as a novel enterprise, timidly beginning to spring up. It bashfully, almost apologetically, gives the traveller to understand that it does not expect him, on the good old constitutional hotel plan, to order a pint of sweet blacking for his drinking, and throw it away, but insinuates that he may have his boots blacked instead of his stomach, and maybe also have bed, breakfast, attendance, and a porter up all night, for a certain fixed charge. From these and similar premises, many true Britons in the lowest spirits deduce that the times are levelling times, except in the article of high roads, of which there will shortly be not one in England.

He eats without appetite, and soon goes forth again Eastward and still eastward through the stale streets he takes his way, until he reaches his destination a miserable court, specially miserable among many such

He ascends a broken staircase, opens a door, looks into a dark stifling room, and says "Are you alone here?"

"Alone, deary, worse luck for me, and better for you," replies a croaking voice "Come in, come in, whoever you be I can't see you till I light a match, yet I seem to know the sound of your speaking I'm acquainted with you, ain't I?"

"Light your match, and try."

"So I will, deary, so I will, but my hand that shakes, as I can't lay it on a match all in a moment And I cough so, that, put my matches where I may, I never find 'em there They jump and start, as I cough and cough, like live things Are you off a voyage, deary?"

" No"

"Not seafaring?"

" No "

"Well, there's land customers, and there's water customers I'm a mother to both Different from Jack Chinaman tother side the court He ain't a father to neither It ain't in him And he ain't got the true secret of mixing, though he charges as much as me that has, and more if he can get it Here's a match, and now where's the candle? If my cough takes me, I shall cough out

twenty matches afore I gets a light"

But she finds the candle, and lights it, before the cough comes on It seizes her in the moment of success, and she sits down rocking herself to and fro and gasping at intervals "Oh, my lungs is awful bad! my lungs is wore away to cabbage-nets!" until the fit is over During its continuance she has had no power of sight, or any other power not absorbed in the struggle, but as it leaves her, she begins to strain her eyes, and as soon as she is able to articulate, she cries, staring -

"Why, it's you!"

"Are you so surprised to see me?"

"I thought I never should have seen you again, deary I thought you was dead, and gone to Heaven"

" Why?"

"I didn't suppose you could have kept away, alive, so long, from the poor old soul with the real receipt for mixing it And you are in mourning too! Why didn't you come and have a pipe or two of comfort? Did they leave you money, perhaps, and so you didn't want comfort?"

" No "

"A relative"

"Probably Death"

[&]quot;Who was they as died, deary?"

[&]quot;Died of what, lovey?"

"We are short to-night'" cries the woman, with a propitiatory laugh "Short and snappish we are! But we're out of sorts for want of a smoke We've got the all-overs haven't us, deary? But this is the place to cure 'em in, this is the place where the all-overs is smoked off"

"You may make ready, then," replies the visitor, "as

soon as you like "

He divests himself of his shoes, loosens his cravat, and lies across the foot of the squalid bed, with his head rest-

ing on his left hand

"Now you begin to look like yourself," says the woman, approxingly "Now I begin to know my old customer indeed! Been trying to mix for yourself this long time, poppet?"

"I have been taking it now and then in my own way"

"Never take it your own way It ain't good for trade, and it ain't good for you Where's my inkbottle, and where's my thimble, and where's my little spoon? He's going to take it in a artful form now, my deary dear!"

Entering on her process, and beginning to bubble and blow at the faint spark enclosed in the hollow of her hands, she speaks from time to time, in a tone of snuffling satisfaction, without leaving off. When he speaks, he does so without looking at her, and as if his thoughts were already roaming away by anticipation.

"I've got a pretty many smokes ready for you, first and

last, haven't I, chuckey?"

"A good many"

"When you first come you was quite new to it, warn't ye?"

"Yes, I was easily disposed of, then"

"But you got on in the world, and was able by-and-by to take your pipe with the best of 'em, warn't ye?"

"Ah, and the worst."

"It's just ready for you What a sweet singer you was when you first come! Used to drop your head, and sing yourself off like a bird! It's ready for you now, deary"

He takes it from her with great care, and puts the mouthpiece to his lips. She seats herself beside him, ready to refill the pipe. After inhaling a few whiffs in silence, he doubtingly accosts her with.—

- "Is it as potent as it used to be?"
- "What do you speak of, deary?"
- "What should I speak of, but what I have in my mouth?"
 - "It's just the same Always the identical same"
 - "It doesn't taste so And it's slower"
 "You've got more used to it, you see"
- "That may be the cause, certainly Look here" He stops, becomes dreamy, and seems to forget that he has invited her attention She bends over him, and speaks in his ear
- "I'm attending to you Says you just now, Look here Says I now, I'm attending to ye We was talking just before of your being used to it"
- "I know all that I was only thinking Look here Suppose you had something in your mind, something you were going to do"

"Yes, deary, something I was going to do?"

"But had not quite determined to do"

"Yes, deary"

"Might or might not do, you understand"

"Yes" With the point of a needle she stirs the contents of the bowl

"Should you do it in your fancy, when you were lying here doing this?"

She nods her head "Over and over again"

"Just like me! I did it over and over again I have done it hundreds of thousands of times in this room"

"It's to be hoped it was pleasant to do, deary "

"It was pleasant to do!"

He says this with a savage air, and a spring or start at her Quite unmoved she retouches and replenishes the contents of the bowl with her little spatula. Seeing her intent upon the occupation, he sinks into his former attitude

"It was a journey, a difficult and dangerous journey That was the subject in my mind A hazardous and perilous journey, over abysses where a slip would be destruction Look down, look down! You see what lies at the bottom there?" He has darted forward to say it, and to point at the ground, as though at some imaginary object far beneath. The woman looks at him, as his spasmodic face approaches close to hers, and not at his pointing. She seems to know what the influence of her perfect quietude would be, if so, she has not miscalculated it, for he subsides again

"Well, I have told you I did it here hundreds of thousands of times What do I say? I did it millions and billions of times I did it so often, and through such vast expanses of time, that when it was really done, it seemed

not worth the doing, it was done so soon"

"That's the journey you have been away upon," she quetly remarks

He glares at her as he smokes, and then, his eyes

becoming filmy, answers "That's the journey"

Silence ensues His eyes are sometimes closed and sometimes open The woman sits beside him, very atten-

tive to the pipe, which is all the while at his lips

"I'll warrant," she observes, when he has been looking fixedly at her for some consecutive moments, with a singular appearance in his eyes of seeming to see her a long way off, instead of so near him "I'll warrant you made the journey in a many ways, when you made it so often?"

"No, always in one way"

"Always in the same way?"

" Av "

"In the way in which it was really made at last?"

" Av "

"And always took the same pleasure in harping on it?"

" Ay "

For the time he appears unequal to any other reply than this lazy monosyllabic assent Probably to assure herself that it is not the assent of a mere automaton, she reverses the form of her next sentence

"Did you never get tired of it, deary, and try to call up something else for a change?"

He struggles into a sitting posture, and retorts upon her "What do you mean? What did I want? What did I come for?"

She gently lays him back again, and before returning

him the instrument he has dropped, revives the fire in it with her own breath, then says to him, coaxingly -

"Sure, sure, sure! Yes, yes, yes! Now I go along with you You was too quick for me I see now You come o' purpose to take the journey Why, I might have known it, through its standing by you so "

He answers first with a laugh, and then with a passionate setting of his teeth "Yes, I came on purpose When I could not bear my life, I came to get the relief, and I got it It was one! It was one!" This repetition with extraordinary vehemence, and the snarl of a wolf

She observes him very cautiously, as though mentally feeling her way to her next remark It is "There was a

fellow-traveller, deary"

"Ha, ha, ha!" He breaks into a ringing laugh, or

rather vell.

"To think," he cries, "how often fellow-traveller, and yet not know it! To think how many times he went the journey, and never saw the road!"

The woman kneels upon the floor, with her arms crossed on the coverlet of the bed, close by him, and her chin upon them In this crouching attitude she watches him The pipe is falling from his mouth. She puts it back, and laying her hand upon his chest, moves him slightly from side to side Upon that he speaks, as if she had spoken

"Yes! I always made the journey first, before the changes of colours and the great landscapes and glittering processions began They couldn't begin till it was off my

mind I had no room till then for anything else"

Once more he lapses into silence Once more she lays her hand upon his chest, and moves him slightly to and fro, as a cat might stimulate a half-slain mouse Once. more he speaks, as if she had spoken

"What? I told you so When it comes to be real at last, it is so short that it seems unreal for the first time.

Hark!"

"Yes, deary I'm listening"

"Time and place are both at hand"

He is on his feet, speaking in a whisper, and as if in the dark.

"Time, place, and fellow-traveller," she suggests adopting his tone, and holding him softly by the arm
"How could the time be at hand unless the fellow-

traveller was? Hush! The journey's made It's over"

"So soon ? ".

"That's what I said to you So soon Wait a little This is a vision I shall sleep it off. It has been too short and easy I must have a better vision than this, this is the poorest of all No struggle, no consciousness of peril, no entreaty—and yet I never saw that before" With a start

"Saw what, deary?"

"Look at it' Look what a poor, mean, miserable thing it is! That must be real It's over"

He has accompanied this incoherence with some wild unmeaning gestures, but they trail off into the progressive

inaction of stupor, and he lies a log upon the bed

The woman, however, is still inquisitive With a repetition of her cat-like action she slightly stirs his body again, and listens, stirs again, and listens, whispers to it, and listens Finding it past all rousing for the time, she slowly gets upon her feet, with an air of disappointment, and flicks the face with the back of her hand in turning from it

But she goes no further away from it than the chair upon the hearth She sits in it, with an elbow on one of its arms, and her chin upon her hand, intent upon him "I heard ye say once," she croaks under her breath, "I heard heard ye say once," she croaks under her breath, "I heard ye say once, when I was lying where you're lying, and you were making your speculations upon me, 'Unintelligible!' I heard you say so, of two more than me But don't ye be too sure always, don't ye be too sure, beauty!"

Unwinking, cat-like, and intent, she presently adds "Not so potent as it once was? Ah! Perhaps not at first You may be more right there Practice makes perfect I may have learned the secret how to make ye talk, dearn."

deary"

He talks no more, whether or no Twitching in an ugly way from time to time, both as to his face and limbs, he lies heavy and silent. The wretched candle burns down,

the woman takes its expiring end between her fingers, lights another at it, crams the guttering frying morsel deep into the candlestick, and rams it home with the new candle, as if she were loading some ill-savoured and unseemly weapon of witchcraft, the new cardle in its turn burns down, and still he lies insensible. At length what remains of the last candle is blown out, and daylight looks into the room

It has not looked very long, when he sits up, chilled and shaking, slowly recovers consciousness of where he is, and makes himself ready to depart. The woman receives what he pays her with a grateful, "Bless ye, bless ye, deary!" and seems, tired out, to begin making herself ready for sleep as he leaves the room

But seeming may be false or true It is false in this case, for, the moment the stairs have ceased to creak under his tread, she glides after him, muttering emphatically "I'll not miss ye twice!"

There is no egress from the court but by its entrance With a weird peep from the doorway, she watches for his looking back. He does not look back before disappearing, with a wavering step. She follows him, peeps from the court, sees him still faltering on without looking back, and holds him in view.

He repairs to the back of Aldersgate Street, where a door immediately opens to his knocking. She crouches in another doorway, watching that one, and easily comprehending that he puts up temporarily at that house. Her patience is unexhausted by hours. For sustenance she can, and does, buy bread within a hundred yards, and milk as it is carried past her.

He comes forth again at noon, having changed his dress, but carrying nothing in his hand, and having nothing carried for him. He is not going back into the country, therefore, just yet. She follows him a little way, hesitates, instantaneously turns confidently, and goes straight into the house he has quitted

"Is the gentleman from Cloisterham indoors?"

" Tust gone out "

"Unlucky When does the gentleman return to Closterham?"

"At six this evening"

'Bless ye and thank ye May the Lord prosper a business where a civil question, even from a poor soul, is so

civilly answered!"

"I'll not miss ye twice!" repeats the poor soul in the street, and not so civilly "I lost ye last, where that omnibus you got into nigh your journey's end plied betwixt the station and the place I wasn't so much as certain that you even went right on to the place Now I know ye did My gentleman from Cloisterham, I'll be there before ye, and bide your coming I've swore my oath that I'll not miss ye twice!"

Accordingly, that same evening the poor soul stands in Cloisterham High Street, looking at the many quaint gables of the Nuns' House, and getting through the time as she best can until nine o'clock, at which hour she has reason to suppose that the arriving omnibus passengers may have some interest for her. The friendly darkness, at that hour, renders it easy for her to ascertain whether this be so or not, and it is so, for the passenger not to be missed twice arrives among the rest.

"Now let me see what becomes of you Go on!"

An observation addressed to the air, and yet it might be addressed to the passenger, so compliantly does he go on along the High Street until he comes to an arched gateway, at which he unexpectedly vanishes. The poor soul quickens her pace, is swift, and close upon him entering under the gateway, but only sees a postern staircase on one side of it, and on the other side an ancient vaulted room, in which a large-headed, grey-haired gentleman is writing, under the odd circumstances of sitting open to the thoroughfare and eyeing all who pass, as if he were toll-taker of the gateway though the way is free

"Halloa!" he cries in a low voice, seeing her brought

to a standstill "who are you looking for?"

"There was a gentleman passed in here this minute sir."

"Live? Up that staircase"

[&]quot;Of course there was What do you want with him?"
"Where do he live, deary?"

"Bless ye! Whisper What's his name, deary?'

"Surname Jasper, Christian name John Mr. John Jasper"

"Has he a calling, good gentleman?"

"Calling? Yes Sings in the choir"

"In the spire?"

"Choir"

"What's that?"

Mr Datchery rises from his papers, and comes to his doorstep "Do you know what a cathedral is?" he asks, jocosely

The woman nods

"What is it?"

She looks puzzled, casting about in her mind to find a definition, when it occurs to her that it is easier to point out the substantial object itself, massive against the darkblue sky and the early stars

"That's the answer Go in there at seven to-morrow morning, and you may see Mr John Jasper, and hear him

too"

"Thank ye! Thank ye!"

The burst of triumph in which she thanks him does not escape the notice of the single buffer of an easy temper living idly on his means. He glances at her, clasps his hands behind him, as the wont of such buffers is, and lounges along the echoing Precincts at her side.

"Or," he suggests, with a backward hitch of his head,

"you can go up at once to Mr Jasper's rooms there"

The woman eyes him with a cunning smile, and shakes her head

"Oh! you don't want to speak to him?"

She repeats her dumb reply, and forms with her lips a soundless "No"

"You can admire him at a distance three times a day, whenever you like It's a long way to come for that,

though "

The woman looks up quickly If Mr Datchery thinks she is to be so induced to declare where she comes from, he is of a much easier temper than she is But she acquite him of such an artful thought, as he lounges along, like

the chartered bore of the city, with his uncovered gray hair blowing about, and his purposeless hands rattling the loose money in the pockets of his trousers

The chink of the money has an attraction for her greedy ears "Wouldn't you help me to pay for my traveller's lodging, dear gentleman, and to pay my way along? I am a poor soul, I am, indeed, and troubled with a grievous cough"

"You know the travellers' lodging, I perceive, and are making directly for it," is Mr Datchery's bland comment, still rattling his loose money "Been here often, my good

woman ? "

"Once in all my life"

"Ay, ay?"

They have arrived at the entrance to the Monks' Vineyard An appropriate remembrance, presenting an exemplary model for imitation, is revived in the woman's mind by the sight of the place She stops at the gate, and says energetically —

"By this token, though you mayn't believe it, That a young gentleman gave me three-and-sixpence as I was coughing my breath away on this very grass I asked

him for three-and-sixpence, and he gave it me"

"Wasn't it a little cool to name your sum?" hints Mr Datchery, still rattling "Isn't it customary to leave the amount open? Mightn't it have had the appearance, to the young gentleman—only the appearance—that he was rather dictated to?"

"Lookee here, deary," she replies, in a confidential and persuasive tone, "I wanted the money to lay it out on a medicine as does me good, and as I deal in I told the young gentleman so, and he gave it me, and I laid it out honest to the last brass farden I want to lay out the same sum in the same way now, and if you'll give it me, I'll lay it out honest to the last brass farden again, upon my soul!"

"What's the medicine?"

"I'll be honest with you beforehand, as well as after It's opium" Mr Datchery, with a sudden change of countenance, gives her a sudden look

"It's opium, deary Neither more nor less And it's

like a human creetur so far, that you always hear what can be said against it, but seldom what can be said in its praise"

Mr Datchery begins very slowly to count out the sum demanded of him Greedily watching his hands, she continued to held forth on the great groundle sit him.

tinues to hold forth on the great example set him

"It was last Christmas Eve, just arter dark, the once that I was here afore, when the young gentleman gave me the three-and-six"

Mr Datchery stops in his counting, finds he has counted wrong, shakes his money together, and begins again

"And the young gentleman's name," she adds, "was

Mr Datchery drops some money, stoops to pick it up, and reddens with the exertion as he asks —

"How do you know the young gentleman's name?"

"I asked him for it, and he told it me I only asked him the two questions, what was his Chris'en name and whether he'd a sweetheart! And he answered, Edwin, and he hadn t"

Mr Datchery pauses with the selected coins in his hand, rather as if he were falling into a brown study of their value, and couldn't bear to part with them. The woman looks at him distrustfully, and with her anger brewing for the event of his thinking better of the gift, but he bestows it on her as if he were abstracting his mind from the sacrifice, and with many servile thanks she goes her way

John Jasper's lamp is kindled, and his lighthouse is shining when Mr Datchery returns alone towards it. As mariners on a dangerous voyage, approaching an iron-bound coast, may look along the beams of the warning light to the haven lying beyond it that may never be reached, so Mr Datchery's wistful gaze is directed to this beacon,

and beyond

His object in now revisiting his lodging is merely to put on the hat which seems so superfluous an article in his wardrobe. It is half-past ten by the Cathedral clock when he walks out into the Precincts again, he lingers and looks about him, as though the enchanted hour when Mr. Durdles may be stoned home having struck he had some expecta-

tion of seeing the Imp who is appointed to the mission of

stoning him

In effect, that Power of Evil is abroad Having nothing living to stone at the moment, he is discovered by Mr Datchery in the unholy office of stoning the dead, through the railings of the churchyard. The Imp finds this a relishing and piquing pursuit, firstly, because their resting-place is announced to be sacred, and secondly, because the tall headstones are sufficiently like themselves, on their beat in the dark, to justify the delicious fancy that they are hurt when hit

Mr Datchery hails him with "Halloa, Winks!"

He acknowledges the hail with "Halloa, Dick!" Their acquaintance seemingly having been established on a famil-

iar footing

"But I say," he remonstrates, "don't yer go a-making my name public I never means to plead to no name, mind yer When they says to me in the Lock-up, a-going to put me down in the book, 'What's your name?' I says to them, 'Find out' Likeways when they says, 'What's your religion?' I says 'Find out'"

Which, it may be observed in passing, it would be immensely difficult for the State, however statistical, to do

"Asides which," adds the boy, "there ain't no family of Winkses"

"I think there must be "

"Yer lie, there ain't The travellers give me the name on account of my getting no settled sleep and being knocked up all night; whereby I gets one eye roused open afore I've shut the other That's what Winks means Deputy's the nighest name to indict me by but yer wouldn't catch me pleading to that, neither "

"Deputy be it always, then We two are good friends

eh, Deputy?"
" Jolly good"

"I forgave you the debt you owed me when we first became acquainted, and many of my sixpences have come your way since, eh, Deputy?"

"Ah! And what's more, yer ain't no friend o' Jarsper's

What did he go a-histing me off my legs for?"

"What indeed! But never mind him now of mine is going your way to-night, Deputy You have just taken in a lodger I have been speaking to, an infirm woman with a cough"

"Puffer," assents Deputy, with a shrewd leer of recognition, and smoking an imaginary pipe, with his head very much on one side and his eyes very much out of their places "Hopeum Puffer"

"What is her name?"

"'Er Royal Highness the Princess Puffer"

"She has some other name than that, where does she live?'

"Up in London Among the Jacks"

"The sailors?"

"I said so, Jacks, and Chavner men, and hother Knifers"

"I should like to know, through you, exactly where she lives"

"All right Give us 'old "

A shilling passes, and, in that spirit of confidence which should pervade all business transactions between principals of honour, this piece of business is considered done

"But here's a lark!" cries Deputy "Where did yer think 'Er Royal Highness is a-goin' to to-morrow morning? Blest if she ain't a goin' to the Kin-free-der-ell!" He greatly prolongs the word in his ecstacy, and smites his leg, and doubles himself up in a fit of shrill laughter

"How do you know that, Deputy?"

"'Cos she told me so just now She said she must be hup and hout o' purpose She ses, 'Deputy, I must 'ave a early wash, and make myself as swell as I can, for I'm a-goin' to take a turn at the Kin-free-der-el!'" He separates the syllables with his former zest, and, not finding his sense of the ludicrous sufficiently relieved by stamping about on the pavement, breaks into a slow and stately dance, perhaps supposed to be performed by the Dean

Mr Datchery receives the communication with a well-satisfied though pondering face, and breaks up the conference Returning to his quaint lodging, and sitting long

over the supper of bread-and-cheese and salad and ale which Mrs Tope has left prepared for him, he still sits when his supper is finished. At length he rises, throws open the door of a corner cupboard, and refers to a few uncouth chalked strokes on its inner side

"I like," says Mr Datchery, "the old tavern way of keeping scores Illegible except to the scorer The scorer not committed, the scored debited with what is Hum, ha! A very small score this, a very against him poor score!"

He sighs over the contemplation of its poverty, takes a bit of chalk from one of the cupboard shelves, and pauses with it in his hand, uncertain what addition to make to the

account

"I think a moderate stroke," he concludes, "is all I am justified in scoring up," so, suits the action to the word, closes the cupboard, and goes to bed

A brilliant morning shines on the old city Its antiquities and ruins are surpassingly beautiful, with a lusty ivy gleaming in the sun, and the rich trees waving in the balmy air Changes of glorious light from moving boughs, songs of birds, scents from gardens, woods, and fields-or, rather, from the one great garden of the whole cultivated island in its yielding time—penetrate into the Cathedral, subdue its earthy odour, and preach the Resurrection and the Life The cold stone tombs of centuries ago grow warm, and flecks of brightness dart into the sternest marble corners of the building, fluttering there like wings

Comes Mr Tope with his large keys, and yawningly unlocks and sets open Come Mrs Tope and attendant sweeping sprites Come, in due time, organist and bellowsboy, peeping down from the red curtains in the loft, fearlessly flapping dust from books up at that remote elevation, and whisking it from stops and pedals. Come sundry rooks, from various quarters of the sky, back to the great tower, who may be presumed to enjoy vibration, and to know that bell and organ are going to give it them Come a very small and straggling congregation indeed chiefly from Minor Canon Corner and the Precincts Come Mr

Crisparkle, fresh and bright, and his ministering brethren. not quite so fresh and bright. Come the Choir in a hurry (always in a hurry, and struggling into their nightgowns at the last moment, like children shirking bed), and comes John Jasper leading their line Last of all comes Mr Datchery into a stall, one of a choice empty collection very much at his service, and glancing about him for Her Royal Highness the Princess Puffer

The service is pretty well advanced before Mr Datchery can discern Her Royal Highness But by that time he has made her out, in the shade She is behind a pillar, carefully withdrawn from the Choir-Master's view, but regards him with the closest attention All unconscious of her presence, he chants and sings She grins when he is most musically fervid, and-yes, Mr Datchery sees her do it!-shakes her fist at him behind the pillar's friendly shelter

Mr Datchery looks again, to convince himself Yes, again! As ugly and withered as one of the fantastic carvings on the under brackets of the stall seats, as malignant as the Evil One, as hard as the big brass eagle holding the sacred books upon his wings (and, according to the sculptor's representation of his ferocious attributes, not at all converted by them), she hugs herself in her lean arms, and then shakes both fists at the leader of the Choir

And at that moment, outside the grated door of the Choir, having eluded the vigilance of Mr Tope by shifty resources in which he is an adept, Deputy peeps, sharpeyed, through the bars, and stares astounded from the threatener to the threatened

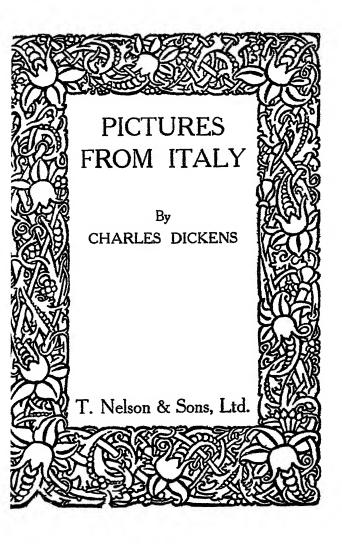
The service comes to an end, and the servitors disperse to breakfast Mr Datchery accosts his last new acquaintance outside, when the Choir (as much in a hurry to get their bedgowns off, as they were but now to get them on) have scuffled away

- "Well, mistress Good-morning You have seen him?"
- "I've seen him, deary, I've seen him!"
 "And you know him?"
- "Know him! Better far than all the Reverend Parsons put together know him "

Mrs Tope's care has spread a very neat, clean breakfast ready for her lodger Before sitting down to it, he opens his corner-cupboard door, takes his bit of chalk from its shelf, adds one thick line to the score, extending from the top of the cupboard door to the bottom, and then falls to with an appetite

THE END OF "EDWIN DROOD"

PICTURES FROM ITALY



PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN AT THE PRESS OF THE PUBLISHERS

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PICTURES FROM ITALY

THE READER'S PASSPORT

If the readers of this volume will be so kind as to take their credentials for the different places which are the subject of its author's reminiscences from the Author himself, perhaps they may visit them, in fancy, the more agreeably, and with a better understanding of what they are to

expect

Many books have been written upon Italy, affording many means of studying the history of that interesting country, and the innumerable associations entwined about it I make but little reference to that stock of information, not at all regarding it as a necessary consequence of my having had recourse to the storehouse for my own benefit, that I should reproduce its easily-accessible contents before the eyes of my readers

Neither will there be found, in these pages, any grave examination into the government or misgovernment of any portion of the country. No visitor of that beautiful land can fail to have a strong conviction on the subject, but as I chose when residing there, a foreigner, to abstain from the discussion of any such questions with any order of Italians, so I would rather not enter on the inquiry now. During my twelve months' occupation of a house at Genoa, I never found that authorities constitutionally jealous were distrustful of me, and I should be sorry to give them occasion to regret their free courtesy, either to myself or any of my countrymen.

There is, probably, not a famous Picture or Statue in all Italy but could be easily buried under a mountain of printed

*

paper devoted to dissertations on it I do not, therefore, though an earnest admirer of Painting and Sculpture, expaniate at any length on famous Pictures and Statues

This Book is a series of faint reflections—mere shadows in the water—of places to which the imaginations of most people are attracted in a greater or less degree, on which mine had dwelt for years, and which have some interest for all. The greater part of the descriptions were written on the spot, and sent home from time to time in private letters. I do not mention the circumstances as an excuse for any defects they may present, for it would be none, but as a guarantee to the Reader that they were at least penned in the fullness of the subject, and with the liveliest impressions of novelty and freshness.

If they have ever a fanciful and idle air, perhaps the reader will suppose them written in the shade of a Sunny Day, in the midst of the objects of which they treat, and will like them none the worse for having such influences of the coun-

try upon them

I hope I am not likely to be misunderstood by professors of the Roman Catholic faith, on account of anything contained in these pages. I have done my best, in one of my former productions, to do justice to them, and I trust, in this, they will do justice to me. When I mention any exhibition that impressed me as absurd or disagreeable, I do not seek to connect it, or recognize it as necessarily connected with, any essentials of their creed. When I treat of the ceremonies of the Holy Week, I merely treat of their effect, and do not challenge the good and learned Dr. Wiseman's interpretation of their meaning. When I hint a dislike of numeries for young girls who abjure the world before they have ever proved or known it, or doubt the ex officio sanctity of all Priests and Friars, I do no more than many conscientious Catholics both abroad and at home.

I have likened these Pictures to shadows in the water, and would fain hope that I have nowhere stirred the water so roughly as to mar the shadows. I could never desire to be on better terms with all my friends than now, when distant mountains rise once more in my path. For I need not hesitate to avow that, bent on correcting a brief mistake

I made not long ago, in disturbing the old relations between myself and my readers, and departing for a moment from my old pursuits, I am about to resume them, joyfully, in Switzerland, where, during another year of absence, I can at once work out the themes I have now in my mind, without interruption, and, while I keep my English audience within speaking distance, extend my knowledge of a noble country, inexpressibly attractive to me

This book is made as accessible as possible, because it would be a great pleasure to me if I could hope, through its means, to compare impressions with some among the multitudes who will hereafter visit the scenes described with

interest and delight

And I have only now, in passport wise, to sketch my reader's portrait, which I hope may be thus supposititiously traced for either sex —

Complexion Eyes Nose Mouth Visage General Expression Fair Very cheerful Not supercitious. Smiling Beaming Excremely agreeable.

GOING THROUGH FRANCE

On a fine Sunday morning in the Midsummer time and weather of eighteen hundred and forty-four, it was, my good friend, when—don't be alarmed, not when two travellers might have been observed slowly making their way over that picturesque and broken ground by which the first chapter of a Middle Aged novel is usually attained—but when an English travelling-carriage of considerable proportions, fresh from the shady halls of the Pantechnicon near Belgrave Square, London, was observed (by a very small French soldier, for I saw him look at it) to issue from the gate of the Hôtel Meurice in the Rue Rivoli at Paris

I am no more bound to explain why the English family travelling by this carriage, inside and out, should be starting for Italy on a Sunday morning, of all good days in the week, than I am to assign a reason for all the little men in France being soldiers, and all the big men postilions—which is the invariable rule. But they had some sort of reason for what they did, I have no doubt, and their reason for being there at all was, as you know, that they were going to live in fair Genoa for a year, and that the head of the family purposed, in that space of time, to stroll about, wherever his restless humour carried him

And it would have been small comfort to me to have explained to the population of Paris generally that I was that Head and Chief, and not the radiant embodiment of goodhumour who sat beside me in the person of a French Courier —best of servants and most beaming of men! Truth to say, he looked a great deal more patriarchal than I, who, in the shadow of his portly presence, dwindled down to no account at all

There was, of course, very little in the aspect of Paris—as we rattled near the dismal Morgue and over the Pont Neuf —to reproach us for our Sunday travelling The wine-shops (every second house) were driving a roaring trade, awnings were spreading, and chairs and tables arranging, outside the cases, preparatory to the eating of ices and drinking of cool liquids later in the day, shoe-blacks were busy on the bridges, shops were open, carts and wagons clattered to and fro, the narrow, up-hill, funnel-like streets across the River, were so many dense perspectives of crowd and bustle, parti-coloured nightcaps, tobacco-pipes, blouses, large boots, and shaggy heads of hair nothing at that hour denoted a day of rest, unless it were the appearance, here and there, of a family pleasure-party crammed into a bulky old lumbering cab, or of some contemplative holiday-maker in the freest and easiest dishabille, leaning out of a low garret window, watching the drying of his newly-polished shoes on the little parapet outside (if a gentleman), or the airing of her stockings in the sun (if a lady), with calm anticipation.

Once clear of the never-to-be-forgotten-or-forgiven pavement which surrounds Paris, the first three days of travelling towards Marseilles are quiet and monotonous enough. To

Sens To Avallon To Chalons A sketch of one day's

proceedings is a sketch of all three, and here it is

We have four horses, and one postilion, who has a very long whip, and drives his team something like the Courier of Saint Petersburgh in the circle at Astley's or Franconi's. only he sits his own horse instead of standing on him immense jack-boots worn by these postilions are sometimes a century or two old, and are so ludicrously disproportionate to the wearer's foot, that the spur, which is put where his own heel comes, is generally halfway up the leg of the boots The man often comes out of the stable-yard, with his whip in his hand and his shoes on, and brings out, in both hands, one boot at a time, which he plants on the ground by the side of his horse with great gravity, until everything is ready When it is—and, O Heaven! the noise they make about it! he gets into the boots, shoes and all, or is hoisted into them by a couple of friends, adjusts the rope harness, embossed by the labours of innumerable pigeons in the stables, makes all the horses kick and plunge, cracks his whip like a madman, shouts, "En route—Hi!" and away we go He is sure to have a contest with his horse before we have gone very far, and then he calls him a thief, and a brigand, and a pig, and what not, and beats him about the head as if he were made of wood

There is little more than one variety in the appearance of the country for the first two days From a dreary plain to an interminable avenue, and from an interminable avenue to a dreary plain again Plenty of vines there are in the open fields, but of a short, low kind, and not trained in festoons, but about straight sticks Beggars innumerable there are, everywhere, but an extraordinarily scanty population, and fewer children than I ever encountered I don't believe we saw a hundred children between Paris and Chalons old towns, drawbridged and walled, with odd little towers at the angles like grotesque faces, as if the wall had put a mask on, and were staring down into the moat, other strange little towers, in gardens and fields, and down lanes, and in farmyards, all alone, and always round, with a peaked roof, and never used for any purpose at all, ruinous buildings of all sorts, sometimes an hôtel de ville, sometimes a guard-house,

sometimes a dwelling-house, sometimes a château with a rank garden, prolific in dandelion, and watched over by extinguisher-topped turrets and blink-eyed little casements, are the standard objects, repeated over and over again Some-times we pass, a village inn, with a crumbling wall belonging to it, and a perfect town of outhouses, and painted over the gateway, "Stabling for Sixty Horses"—as indeed there might be stabling for sixty score, were there any horses to be stabled there, or anybody resting there, or anything stirring about the place but a dangling bush, indicative of the wine inside, which flutters idly in the wind, in lazy keeping with everything else, and certainly is never in a green old age, though always so old as to be dropping to pieces And all day long. strange little narrow wagons, in strings of six or eight, bringing cheese from Switzerland, and frequently in charge, the whole line, of one man, or even boy—and he very often asleep in the foremost cart-come jingling past, the horses drowsily ringing the bells upon their harness, and looking as if they thought (no doubt they do) their great blue woolly furniture, of immense weight and thickness, with a pair of grotesque horns growing out of the collar, very much too warm for the Midsummer weather

Then there is the Diligence, twice or thrice a day, with the dusty outsides in blue frocks, like butchers, and the insides in white nightcaps, and its cabriolet head on the roof. nodding and shaking, like an idiot's head, and its Young-France passengers staring out of window, with beards down to their waists, and blue spectacles awfully shading their warlike eyes, and very big sticks clenched in their National grasp. Also the Malle Poste, with only a couple of passengers, tearing along at a real good dare-devil pace, and out of sight in no Steady old Curés come jolting past, now and then, in such ramshackle, rusty, musty, clattering coaches as no Englishman would believe in, and bony women dawdle about in solitary places, holding cows by ropes while they feed, or digging and hoeing or doing fieldwork of a more laborious kind, or representing real shepherdesses with their flocks-to obtain an adequate idea of which pursuit and its followers, in any country, it is only necessary to take any pastoral poem, or picture, and imagine to yourself whatever

is most exquisitely and widely unlike the description therein contained

You have been travelling along, stupidly enough, as you generally do in the last stage of the day, and the ninety-six bells upon the horses—twenty-four apiece—have been ringing sleepily in your ears for half an hour or so, and it has become a very jog-trot, monotonous, tiresome sort of business, and you have been thinking deeply about the dinner you will have at the next stage-when, down at the end of the long avenue of trees through which you are travelling, the first indication of a town appears, in the shape of some straggling cottages, and the carriage begins to rattle and roll over a horribly uneven pavement. As if the equipage were a great firework, and the mere sight of a smoking cottage chimney had lighted it, instantly it begins to crack and splutter, as if the very devil were in it. Crack, crack, crack, crack crack-crack Crick-crack Crick-crack Vite! Voleur! Brigand! Hi! hi! hi! En r-r-r-route! Whip, wheels, driver, stones, beggars, children, crack, crack, crack, helo! hola! charité pour l'amour de Dieu! crickcrack-crick-crack, crick, crick, bump, jolt, crack, bump, crick-crack, round the corner, up the narrow street, down the paved hill on the other side, in the gutter, bump, bump, jolt, jog, crick, crick, crick, crack, crack, crack, into the shop windows on the left-hand side of the street, preliminary to a sweeping turn into the wooden archway on the right, rumble, rumble, rumble, clatter, clatter, clatter, crick, crick, crick, and here we are in the yard of the Hôtel de l'Ecu d'Or, used up, gone out, smoking, spent, exhausted, but sometimes making a false start unexpectedly, with nothing coming of it-like a firework to the last!

The landlady of the Hôtel de l'Ecu d'Or is here, and the landlord of the Hôtel de l'Ecu d'Or is here, and the femme de chambre of the Hôtel de l'Ecu d'Or is here, and a gentleman in a glazed cap, with a red beard like a bosom friend, who is staying at the Hôtel de l'Ecu d'Or, is here, and Monsieur le Curé is walking up and down in a corner of the yard by himself, with a shovel hat upon his head, and a black gown on his back, and a book in one hand, and an umbrella in the other, and everybody, except Monsieur le Curé, is

open-mouthed and open-eyed, for the opening of the carriagedoor The landlord of the Hôtel de l'Ecu d'Or dotes to that extent upon the Courier, that he can hardly wait for his coming down from the box, but embraces his very legs and boot heels as he descends "My Courier My brave Cou rier! My friend! My brother!" The landlady loves him, the femme de chambre blesses him, the garçon worships him The Courier asks if his letter has been received? It has it has Are the rooms prepared? They are, they are The best rooms for my noble Courier The rooms of state for my gallant Courier, the whole house is at the service of my best of friends! He keeps his hand upon the carriage-door. and asks some other question to enhance the expectation. He carries a green leathern purse outside his coat, suspended by a belt The idlers look at it, one touches it. It is full of five-franc pieces Murmurs of admiration are heard among the boys The landlord falls upon the Courier's neck, and folds him to his breast. He is so much fatter than he was, he says He looks so rosy and so well !

The door is opened Breathless expectation The lady of the family gets out. Ah, sweet lady! Beautiful lady! The sister of the lady of the family gets out Great Heaven, Ma'amselle is charming! First little boy gets out Ah, what a beautiful little boy! First little girl gets out Oh, but this is an enchanting child! Second little girl gets out The landlady, yielding to the finest impulse of our common nature, catches her up in her arms! Second little boy gets out. Oh, the sweet boy! Oh, the tender little family! The baby is handed out Angelic baby! The baby has topped everything. All the rapture is expended on the baby! Then the two nurses tumble out, and the enthusiasm swelling into madness, the whole family are swept upstairs as on a cloud, while the idlers press about the carriage, and look into it, and walk round it, and touch it. For it is something to touch a carriage that has held so many people. It is a legacy to leave one's children

The rooms are on the first floor, except the nursery for the night, which is a great rambling chamber, with four or five beds in it—through a dark passage, up two steps, down

four, past a pump, across a balcony, and next door to the stable The other sleeping apartments are large and lofty, each with two small bedsteads, tastefully hung, like the windows, with red and white drapery The sitting-room is famous Dinner is already laid in it for three, and the napkins are folded in cocked-hat fashion. The floors are of red tile There are no carpets, and not much furniture to speak of, but there is abundance of looking-glass, and there are large vases under glass shades filled with artificial flowers, and there are plenty of clocks. The whole party are in motion The brave Courier, in particular, is everywherelooking after the beds, having wine poured down his throat by his dear brother the landlord, and picking up green cucumbers-always cucumbers, Heaven knows where he gets them-with which he walks about, one in each hand, like truncheons

Dinner is announced. There is very thin soup, there are very large loaves—one apiece, a fish, four dishes afterwards, some poultry afterwards, a dessert afterwards, and no lack of wine. There is not much in the dishes, but they are very good, and always ready instantly. When it is nearly dark, the brave Courier, having eaten the two cucumbers, sliced up in the contents of a pretty large decanter of oil, and another of vinegar, emerges from his retreat below, and proposes a visit to the Cathedral, whose massive tower frowns down upon the courtyard of the inn. Off we go, and very solemn and grand it is in the dim light—so dim at last, that the polite old lanthorn-jawed Sacristan has a feeble little bit of candle in his hand, to grope among the tombs with, and looks among the grim columns very like a lost ghost who is searching for his own

Underneath the balcony, when we return, the inferior servants of the inn are supping in the open air, at a great table, the dish, a stew of meat and vegetables, smoking hot, and served in the iron caldron it was boiled in. They have a pitcher of thin wine, and are very merry—merrier than the gentleman with the red beard, who is playing billiards in the light room on the left of the yard, where shadows, with cues in their hands and cigars in their mouths, cross and recross the window constantly. Still the thin Curé walks up and

down alone, with his book and umbrella. And there he walks, and there the billiard-balls rattle, long after we are

fast asleep

We are astir at six next morning. It is a delightful day, shaming yesterday's mud upon the carriage, if anything could shame a carriage in a land where carriages are never cleaned. Everybody is brisk, and as we finish breakfast, the horses come jingling into the yard from the Post-house. Everything taken out of the carriage is put back again. The brave Couner announces that all is ready, after walking into every room, and looking all round it, to be certain that nothing is left behind. Everybody gets in. Everybody connected with the Hotel de l'Ecu d'Or is again enchanted. The brave Couner runs into the house for a parcel containing cold fowl, sliced ham, bread, and biscuits, for lunch, hands it into the coach, and runs back again.

What has he got in his hand now? More cucumbers?

No A long strip of paper It's the bill

The brave Courier has two belts on this morning—one supporting the purse, another, a mighty good sort of leathern bottle, filled to the throat with the best light Bordeaux wine in the house He never pays the bill till this bottle is full

Then he disputes it.

He disputes it now, violently He is still the landlord's brother, but by another father or mother He is not so nearly related to him as he was last night. The landlord scratches his head. The brave Courier points to certain figures in the bill, and intimates that if they remain there the Hôtel de l'Ecu d'Or is thenceforth and for ever an Hôtel de l'Ecu de cuivre. The landlord goes into a little counting-house. The brave Courier follows, forces the bill and a pen into his hand, and talks more rapidly than ever. The landlord takes the pen. The Courier smiles. The landlord is affectionate, but not weakly so. He bears it like a man. He shakes hands with his brave brother, but he don't hug him. Still, he loves his brother, for he knows that he will be returning that way, one of these fine days, with another family, and he foresees that his heart will yearn towards him again. The brave Courier traverses all round the car-

riage once, looks at the drag, inspects the wheels, jumps up, gives the word, and away we go!

It is market morning. The market is held in the little square outside in front of the cathedral. It is crowded with men and women, in blue, in red, in green, in white, with canvassed stalls and fluttering merchandise. The country people are grouped about, with their clean baskets before them. Here, the lace-sellers, there, the butter and egg sellers, there, the fruit-sellers, there, the shoemakers. The whole place looks as if it were the stage of some great theatre, and the curtain had just run up for a picturesque ballet. And there is the cathedral to boot—scene-like, all grim, and swarthy, and mouldering, and cold, just splashing the pavement in one place with faint purple drops, as the morning sun, entering by a little window on the eastern side, struggles through some stained-glass panes on the western

In five minutes we have passed the iron cross, with a little ragged kneeling-place of turf before it, in the outskirts of the

town, and are again upon the road

LYONS, THE RHONE, AND THE GOBLIN OF AVIGNON

CHALONS is a fair resting-place, in right of its good inn on the bank of the river, and the little steam-boats, gay with green and red paint, that come and go upon it, which make up a pleasant and refreshing scene after the dusty roads But, unless you would like to dwell on an enormous plain, with jagged rows of irregular poplars on it, that look in the distance like so many combs with broken teeth, and unless you would like to pass your life without the possibility of going up-hill, or going up anything but stairs, you would hardly approve of Chalons as a place of residence

You would probably like it better, however, than Lyons, which you may reach, if you will, in one of the before-

mentioned steam-boats, in eight hours

What a city Lyons is! Talk about people feeling, at certain unlucky times, as if they had tumbled from the clouds! Here is a whole town that has tumbled, anyhow,

out of the sky, having been first caught up, like other stones that tumble down from that region, out of fens and barren places dismal to behold! The two great streets through which the two great rivers dash, and all the little streets whose name is Legion, were scorching, blistering, and sweltering, the houses, high and vast, dirty to excess, rotten as old cheeses, and as thickly peopled. All up the hills that hem the city in these houses swarm, and the mites inside were lolling out of the windows, and drying their ragged clothes on poles, and crawling in and out at the doors, and coming out to pant and gasp upon the pavement, and creeping in and out among huge piles and bales of fusty, musty, stifling goods, and living, or rather not dying till their time should come, in an exhausted receiver. Every manufacturing town, melted into one, would hardly convey an impression of Lyons as it presented itself to me, for all the undrained, unscavengered qualities of a foreign town seemed grafted, there, upon the native miseries of a manufacturing one, and it bears such fruit as I would go some miles out of my way to avoid encountering again

In the cool of the evening, or rather in the faded heat of the day, we went to see the Cathedral, where divers old women, and a few dogs, were engaged in contemplation. There was no difference, in point of cleanliness, between its stone pavement and that of the streets, and there was a wax saint, in a little box like a berth aboard ship, with a glass front to it, whom Madame Tussaud would have nothing to say to, on any terms, and which even Westminster Abbey might be ashamed of If you would know all about the architecture of this church, or any other, its dates, dimensions, endowments, and history, is it not written in Mr Murray's Guide-Book, and may you not read it there, with thanks to him, as I did!

For this reason, I should abstain from mentioning the curious clock in Lyons Cathedral, if it were not for a small mistake I made, in connection with that piece of mechanism. The keeper of the church was very anxious it should be shown, partly for the honour of the establishment and the town, and partly, perhaps, because of his deriving a percentage from the additional consideration. However that

may be, it was set in motion, and thereupon a host of little doors flew open, and innumerable little figures staggered out of them, and jerked themselves back again, with that special unsteadiness of purpose, and hitching in the gait, which usually attaches to figures that are moved by clock-work Meanwhile, the Sacristan stood explaining these wonders, and pointing them out, severally, with a wand. There was a centre puppet of the Virgin Mary, and close to her, a small pigeon-hole, out of which another and a very ill-looking puppet made one of the most sudden plunges I ever saw accomplished-instantly flopping back again at sight of her, and banging his little door violently after him Taking this to be emblematic of the victory over Sin and Death, and not at all unwilling to show that I perfectly understood the subject, in anticipation of the showman, I rashly said, "Aha! The Evil Spirit To be sure He is very soon disposed of" "Pardon, Monsieur," said the Sacristan, with a polite motion of his hand towards the little door, as if introducing somebody-"The Angel Gabriel!"

Soon after daybreak next morning we were steaming down the arrowy Rhone, at the rate of twenty miles an hour, in a very dirty vessel full of merchandise, and with only three or four other passengers for our companions, among whom, the most remarkable was a silly, old, meek-faced, garlic-eating, immeasurably polite Chevalier, with a dirty scrap of red ribbon hanging at his buttonhole, as if he had tied it there to remind himself of something—as Tom Noddy, in the farce, ties knots in his pocket-handkerchief

For the last two days we had seen great sullen hills, the first indications of the Alps, lowering in the distance. Now, we were rushing on beside them—sometimes close beside them, sometimes with an intervening slope, covered with vineyards. Villages and small towns hanging in mid-air, with great woods of olives seen through the light open towers of their churches, and clouds moving slowly on, upon the steep acclivity behind them, ruined castles perched on every eminence, and scattered houses in the clefts and gullies of the hills, made it very beautiful. The great height of these, too, making the buildings look so tiny, that they had all the charm of elegant models, their excessive whiteness, as

contrasted with the brown rocks, or the sombre, deep, dull, heavy green of the olive-tree, and the puny size, and little slow walk of the Lilliputian men and women on the bank, made a charming picture. There were ferries out of number, too, bridges, the famous Pont d'Esprit, with I don't know how many arches, towns where memorable wines are made, Vallence, where Napoleon studied, and the noble river, bringing at every winding turn new beauties into view

There lay before us, that same afternoon, the broken bridge of Avignon, and all the city baking in the sun, yet with an underdone pie-crust, battlemented wall, that never

will be brown though it bake for centuries

The grapes were hanging in clusters in the streets, and the brilliant oleander was in full bloom everywhere. The streets are old and very narrow, but tolerably clean, and shaded by awnings stretched from house to house. Bright stuffs and handkerchiefs, curiosities, ancient frames of carved wood, old chairs, ghostly tables, saints, virgins, angels, and staring daubs of portraits, being exposed for sale beneath, it was very quaint and lively. All this was much set off, too, by the glimpses one caught, through rusty gates standing ajar, of quiet, sleepy courtyards, having stately old houses within, as silent as tombs. It was all very like one of the descriptions in the Arabian Nights. The three one-eyed Calenders might have knocked at any one of those doors till the street rang again, and the porter who persisted in asking questions—the man who had the delicious purchases put into his basket in the morning—might have opened it quite naturally

After breakfast next morning, we sallied forth to see the lions Such a delicious breeze was blowing in, from the north, as made the walk delightful, though the pavement stones, and stones of the walls and houses, were far too hot

to have a hand laid on them comfortably

We went, first of all, up a rocky height, to the Cathedral, where Mass was performing to an auditory very like that of Lyons—namely, several old women, a baby, and a very self-possessed dog, who had marked out for himself a little course or platform for exercise, beginning at the altar-rails and ending at the door, up and down which constitutional walk he trotted, during the service, as methodically and

calmly as any old gentleman out of doors. It is a bare old church, and the paintings in the roof are sadly defaced by time and damp weather, but the sun was shining in splendidly through the red curtains of the windows, and glittering on the altar furniture, and it looked as bright and cheerful as need be

Going apart, in this chuich, to see some painting which was being executed in fresco by a French artist and his pupil, I was led to observe more closely than I might otherwise have done a great number of votive offerings with which the walls of the different chapels were profusely hung. I will not say decorated, for they were very roughly and comically got up, most likely by poor sign-painters, who eke out their living in that way. They were all little pictures, each representing some sickness or calamity from which the person placing it there had escaped, through the interposition of his or her patron saint, or of the Madonna, and I may refer to them as good specimens of the class generally. They are abundant in Italy

In a grotesque squareness of outline, and impossibility of perspective, they were not unlike the woodcuts in old books. but they were oil-paintings, and the artist, like the painter of the Primrose family, had not been sparing of his colours In one, a lady was having a toe amputated—an operation which a saintly personage had sailed into the room, upon a cloud, to superintend In another, a lady was lying in bed, tucked up very tight and prim, and staring with much composure at a tripod, with a slop-basin on it—the usual form of washing-stand, and the only piece of furniture, besides the bedstead, in her chamber One would never have supposed her to be labouring under any complaint, beyond the inconvenience of being miraculously wide awake, if the painter had not hit upon the idea of putting all her family on their knees in one corner, with their legs sticking out behind them on the floor, like boot-trees Above whom, the Virgin, on a kind of blue divan, promised to restore the patient another case, the lady was in the very act of being run over, immediately outside the city walls, by a sort of pianoforte But the Madonna was there again Whether the supernatural appearance had startled the horse (a bay griffin),

or whether it was invisible to him, I don't know, but he was galloping away, ding-dong, without the smallest reverence or compunction On every picture "Ex voto" was painted in

yellow capitals in the sky

Though votive offerings were not unknown in Pagan temples, and are evidently among the many compromises made between the false religion and the true, when the true was in its infancy, I could wish that all the other compromises were as harmless Gratitude and Devotion are Christian qualities, and a grateful, humble, Christian spirit may dictate the observance

Hard by the cathedral stands the ancient Palace of the Popes, of which one portion is now a common jail, and another a noisy barrack, while gloomy suites of state apartments, shut up and deserted, mock their own old state and glory, like the embalmed bodies of kings. But we neither went there, to see state rooms, nor soldiers' quarters, nor a common jail, though we dropped some money into a prisoners' box outside, whilst the prisoners themselves looked through the iron bars high up, and watched us eagerly. We went to see the ruins of the dreadful rooms in which the Inquisition used to sit

A little, old, swarthy woman, with a pair of flashing black eyes-proof that the world hadn't conjured down the devil within her, though it had had between sixty and seventy years to do it in—came out of the Barrack Cabaret, of which she was the keeper, with some large keys in her hands, and marshalled us the way that we should go How she told us, on the way, that she was a Government Officer (concuerge du palais apostolique), and had been for I don't know how many years, and how she had shown these dungeons to princes, and how she was the best of dungeon demonstrators, and how she had resided in the palace from an infant—had been born there, if I recollect right— I needn't relate But such a fierce, little, rapid, sparkling, energetic she-devil I never beheld. She was alight and flaming all the time Her action was violent in the extreme She never spoke, without stopping expressly for the She stamped her feet, clutched us by the arms, flung hereelf into attitudes, hammered against walls with her

keys, for mere emphasis, now whispered as if the Inquisition were there still, now shrieked as if she were on the rack herself, and had a mysterious, hag-like way with her forefinger, when approaching the remains of some new horror—looking back, and walking stealthily, and making horrible grimaces—that might alone have qualified her to walk up and down a sick man's counterpane, to the exclusion of all other figures, through a whole fever

Passing through the courtyard, among groups of idle soldiers, we turned off by a gate, which this She-Goblin unlocked for our admission, and locked again behind us, and entered a narrow court, rendered narrower by fallen stones and heaps of rubbish, part of it choking up the mouth of a ruined subterranean passage, that once communicated (or is said to have done so) with another castle on the opposite bank of the river Close to this courtyard is a dungeon-we stood within it, in another minute—in the dismal tower des oubliettes, where Rienzi was imprisoned, fastened by an iron chain to the very wall that stands there now, but shut out from the sky which now looks down into it. A few steps brought us to the Cachots, in which the prisoners of the Inquisition were confined for forty-eight hours after their capture, without food or drink, that their constancy might be shaken, even before they were confronted with their gloomy judges The day has not got in there yet They are still small cells, shut in by four unyielding, close, hard walls, still profoundly dark, still massively doored and fastened, as of old

Goblin, looking back as I have described, went softly on, into a vaulted chamber, now used as a storeroom—once the Chapel of the Holy Office. The place where the tribunal sat was plain. The platform might have been removed but yesterday. Conceive the parable of the Good Samaritan having been painted on the wall of one of these Inquisition chambers! But it was, and may be traced there yet

High up in the jealous wall are niches, where the faltering replies of the accused were heard and noted down. Many of them had been brought out of the very cell we had just looked into, so awfully—along the same stone passage. We had trodden in their very footsteps.

I am gazing round me, with the horror that the place

inspires, when Goblin clutches me by the wrist, and lays, not her skinny finger, but the handle of a key, upon her lip. She invites me, with a jerk, to follow her I do so She leads me out into a room adjoining—a rugged room, with a funnel-shaped, contracting roof, open at the top to the bright day I ask her what it is She folds her arms, leers hideously, and stares I ask again She glances round to see that all the little company are there, sits down upon a mound of stones, throws up her arms, and yells out, like a fiend, "La Salle de la Question!"

The Chamber of Torture! And the roof was made of that shape to stifle the victim's cries! O Goblin, Goblin, let us think of this awhile in silence Peace, Goblin! Sit with your short arms crossed on your short legs, upon that heap of stones, for only five minutes, and then flame out

again

Minutes! Seconds are not marked upon the Palace clock when, with her eyes flashing fire, Goblin is up, in the middle of the chamber, describing, with her sunburnt arms, a wheel of heavy blows Thus it ran round! cries Goblin. Mash, mash, mash! An endless routine of heavy hammers Mash, mash, mash! upon the sufferer's limbs See the stone trough! says Goblin For the water torture! Gurgle, swill, bloat, burst, for the Redeemer's honour! Suck the bloody rag, deep down into your unbelieving body, Heretic, at every breath you draw! And when the executioner plucks it out. reeking with the smaller mysteries of God's own Image, know us for His chosen servants, true believers in the Sermon on the Mount, elect disciples of Him who never did a miracle but to heal, who never struck a man with palsy, blindness, deafness, dumbness, madness, any one affliction of mankind, and never stretched His blessed hand out but to give relief and ease!

See! cries Goblin There the furnace was There they made the irons red-hot Those holes supported the sharp stake, on which the tortured persons hung poised—dangling with their whole weight from the roof "But"—and Goblin whispers this—"Monsieur has heard of this tower? Yes? Let Monsieur look down, then!"

A cold air, laden with an earthy smell, falls upon the face

of Monsieur, for she has opened, while speaking, a trapdoor in the wall Monsieur looks in Downward to the bottom, upward to the top, of a steep, dark, lofty towervery dismal, very dark, very cold The Executioner of the Inquisition, says Goblin, edging in her head to look down also, flung those who were past all further torturing down here "But look! does Monsieur see the black stains on the wall?" A glance, over his shoulder, at Goblin's keen eye, shows Monsieur—and would without the aid of the directing key—where they are "What are they?" "Blood!"

In October 1791, when the Revolution was at its height here, sixty persons—men and women ("and priests," says Goblin, "priests")—were murdered, and hurled, the dying and the dead, into this dreadful pit, where a quantity of quicklime was tumbled down upon their bodies. Those ghastly tokens of the massacre were soon no more, but while one stone of the strong building in which the deed was done remains upon another, there they will lie in the memories of men, as plain to see as the splashing of their blood upon the wall is now

Was it a portion of the great scheme of Retribution that the cruel deed should be committed in this place? That a part of the atrocities and monstrous institutions, which had been, for scores of years, at work to change men's nature, should, in its last service, tempt them with the ready means of gratifying their furious and beastly rage!—should enable them to show themselves, in the height of their frenzy, no worse than a great, solemn, legal establishment, in the height of its power? No worse? Much better They used the Tower of the Forgotten in the name of Liberty—their liberty, an earth-born creature, nursed in the black mud of the Bastile moats and dungeons, and necessarily betraying many evidences of its unwholesome bringing-up—but the Inquisition used it in the name of Heaven

Goblin's finger is lifted, and she steals out again, into the Chapel of the Holy Office She stops at a certain part of the flooring Her great effect is at hand She waits for the rest She darts at the brave Courier, who is explaining something, hits him a sounding rap on the hat with the

largest key, and bids him be silent. She assembles us all

round a little trap-door in the floor, as round a grave

"Voilà!" She darts down at the ring, and flings the door open with a crash, in her goblin energy, though it is no light weight "Voila les oubliettes! Voila les oubliettes! Subterranean! Frightful! Black! Terrible! Deadly! Les oubliettes de l'Inquisition!"

My blood ran cold, as I looked from Goblin down into the vaults, where those forgotten creatures, with recollections of the world outside—of wives, friends, children, brothers—starved to death, and made the stones ring with their unavailing groans. But the thrill I felt on seeing the accursed wall below, decayed and broken through, and the sun shining in through its gaping wounds, was like a sense of victory and triumph. I felt exalted with the proud delight of living in these degenerate times to see it—as if I were the hero of some high achievement! The light in the dole ful vaults was typical of the light that has streamed in on all persecution in God's name, but which is not yet at its noon! It cannot look more lovely to a blind man newly restored to sight, than to a traveller who sees it, calmly and majestically, treading down the darkness of that Infernal Well

AVIGNON TO GENOA

Goblin, having shown les oubliettes, felt that her great coup was struck. She let the door fall with a crash, and stood

upon it with her arms akimbo, sniffing prodigiously

When we left the place, I accompanied her into her house, under the outer gateway of the fortress, to buy a little history of the building. Her cabaret, a dark, low room, lighted by small windows sunk in the thick wall—in the softened light, and with its forge-like chimney, its little counter by the door, with bottles, jars, and glasses on it, its household implements and scraps of dress against the walls, and a sober-looking woman (she must have a congenial life of it, with Goblin) knitting at the door—looked exactly like a picture by OSTADE

I walked round the building on the outside, in a sort of

dicam, and yet with the delightful sense of having awakened from it, of which the light, down in the vaults, had given me the assurance The immense thickness and giddy height of the walls, the enormous strength of the massive towers, the great extent of the building, its gigantic proportions, frowning aspect, and barbarous irregularity, awaken awe and wonder. The recollection of its opposite old uses-an impregnable fortress, a luxurious palace, a horrible prison, a place of torture, the court of the Inquisition at one and the same time, a house of feasting, fighting, religion, and blood-gives to every stone in its huge form a fearful interest, and imparts new meaning to its incongruities I could think of little. however, then, or long afterwards, but the sun in the dun-The palace coming down to be the lounging-place of noisy soldiers, and being forced to echo their rough talk and common oaths, and to have their garments fluttering from its dirty windows, was some reduction of its state, and something to rejoice at, but the day in its cells, and the sky for the roof of its chambers of cruelty—that was its desolation and defeat! If I had seen it in a blaze from ditch to rampart, I should have felt that not that light, nor all the light in all the fire that burns, could waste it like the sunbeams in its secret council-chamber and its prisons

Before I quit this Palace of the Popes, let me translate from the little history I mentioned just now a short anecdote, quite appropriate to itself, connected with its adventures

"An ancient tradition relates that in 1441 a nephew of Pierre de Lude, the Pope's legate, seriously insulted some distinguished ladies of Avignon, whose relations, in revenge, seized the young man and horribly mutilated him. For several years the legate kept his revenge within his own breast, but he was not the less resolved upon its gratification at last. He even made, in the fullness of time, advances towards a complete reconciliation, and when their apparent sincerity had prevailed, he invited to a splendid banquet, in this palace, certain families, whole families, whom he sought to exterminate. The utmost gaiety animated the repast, but the measures of the legate were well taken. When the dessert was on the board, a Swiss presented himself, with the announcement that a strange ambassador solicited an extra-

ordinary audience The legate, excusing himself for the moment to his guests, retired, followed by his officers Within a few minutes afterwards five hundred persons were reduced to ashes, the whole of that wing of the building having been blown into the air with a terrible explosion!'

After seeing the churches (I will not trouble you with churches just now), we left Avignon that afternoon heat being very great, the roads outside the walls were strewn with people fast asleep in every little slip of shade, and with lazy groups, half-asleep and half-awake who were waiting until the sun should be low enough to admit of their playing bowls amongst the burnt-up trees and on the dusty road The harvest here was already gathered in, and mules and horses were treading out the corn in the fields We came at dusk upon a wild and hilly country, once famous for brigands, and travelled slowly up a steep ascent So we went on until eleven at night, when we halted at the town of Aix (within two stages of Marseilles) to sleep

The hotel, with all the blinds and shutters closed to keep the light and heat out, was comfortable and airy next morning, and the town was very clean, but so hot and so intensely light that when I walked out at noon it was like coming suddenly from the darkened room into crisp blue fire The air was so very clear that distant hills and rocky points appeared within an hour's walk, while the town immediately at hand -with a kind of blue wind between me and it-seemed to be white hot, and to be throwing off a fiery air from its

surface

We left this town towards evening, and took the road to Marseilles A dusty road it was, the houses shut up close, and the vines powdered white At nearly all the cottage doors women were peeling and slicing onions into earthen bowls for supper So they had been doing last night all the way from Avignon. We passed one or two shady, dark châteaux, surrounded by trees, and embellished with cool basins of water, which were the more refreshing to behold, from the great scarcity of such residences on the road we had travelled As we approached Marseilles, the road began to be covered with holiday people Outside the public-houses were parties smoking, drinking, playing draughts and

cards, and (once) dancing But dust, dust, dust everywhere. We went on, through a long, straggling, dirty suburb, thronged with people, having on our left a dreary slope of land, on which the country-houses of the Marseilles merchants, always staring white, are jumbled and heaped without the slightest order-backs, fronts, sides, and gables towards all points of the compass-until, at last, we entered the town.

I was there twice or thrice afterwards, in fair weather and foul, and I am afraid there is no doubt that it is a dirty and disagreeable place But the prospect, from the fortified heights, of the beautiful Mediteiranear, with its lovely rocks and islands, is most delightful. These heights are a desirable retreat, for less picturesque reasons—as an escape from a compound of vile smells perpetually arising from a great harbour full of stagnant water, and befouled by the refuse of innumerable ships with all sorts of cargoes, which, in hot weather, is dreadful in the last degree

There were foreign sailors, of all nations, in the streets, with red shirts, blue shirts, buff shirts, tawny shirts, and shirts of orange colour, with red caps, blue caps, green caps, great beards, and no beards, in Turkish turbans, glazed English hats, and Neapolitan head-dresses There were the townspeople sitting in clusters on the pavement, or airing themselves on the tops of their houses, or walking up and down the closest and least arry of Boulevards, and there were crowds of fierce-looking people of the lower sort blocking up the way constantly the very heart of all this stir and uproar was the common madhouse-a low, contracted, miserable building, looking straight upon the street, without the smallest screen or courtyard, where chattering madmen and madwomen were peeping out through rusty bars at the staring faces below, while the sun, darting fiercely aslant into their little cells, seemed to dry up their brains, and worry them, as if they were baited by a pack of dogs

We were pretty well accommodated at the Hôtel du Paradis, situated in a narrow street of very high houses, with a hairdresser's shop opposite, exhibiting in one of its windows two full-length waxen ladies, twirling round and round, which so enchanted the hairdresser himself, that he and his family sat in arm-chairs, and in cool undresses, on the pavement

outside, enjoying the gratification of the passers-by with lazy dignity. The family had retired to rest when we went to ned at midnight, but the hairdresser (a corpulent man, in drab slippers) was still sitting there, with his legs stretched out before him, and evidently couldn't bear to have the shutters

put up

Next day we went down to the harbour, where the sailors of all nations were discharging and taking in cargoes of all kinds—fruits, wines, oils, silks, stuffs, velvets, and every manner of merchandise. Taking one of a great number of lively little boats with gay-striped awnings, we rowed away, under the sterns of great ships, under tow-ropes and cables, against and among other boats, and very much too near the sides of vessels that were faint with oranges, to the Marie Antoinette, a handsome steamer bound for Genoa, lying near the mouth of the harbour. By-and-by, the carriage, that unwieldy "trifle from the Pantechnicon," on a flat barge, bumping against everything, and giving occasion for a prodigious quantity of oaths and grimaces, came stupidly alongside, and by five o'clock we were steaming out in the open sea. The vessel was beautifully clean, the meals were served under an awning on deck, the night was calm and clear, the quiet beauty of the sea and sky unspeakable.

We were off Nice early next morning, and coasted along within a few miles of the Cornice road (of which more in its place) nearly all day. We could see Genoa before three, and watching it as it gradually developed its splendid amphitheatre, terrace rising above terrace, garden above garden, palace above palace, height upon height, was ample occupation for us till warran into the stately backers.

palace above palace, height upon height, was ample occupa-tion for us, till we ran into the stately harbour. Having been duly astonished here by the sight of a few Cappuccíni monks, who were watching the fair weighing of some wood upon the wharf, we drove off to Albaro, two miles distant, where we

had engaged a house

The way lay through the main streets, but not through the Strada Nuova or the Strada Balbi, which are the famous streets of palaces. I never in my life was so dismayed! The wonderful novelty of everything, the unusual smells, the unaccountable filth (though it is reckoned the cleanest of Italian towns), the disorderly jumbling of dirty houses, one upon the

mof of another, the passages more squalid and more close than any in St Giles's or old Pans, in and out of which. nct vagabonds, but well-dressed women, with white veils and great fans, were passing and repassing, the perfect absence of resemblance in any dwelling-house, or shop, or wall, or post, or pillar, to anything one had ever seen before, and the disheartening dirt, discomfort, and decay, perfectly confourded me I fell into a dismal reverie I am conscious of a feverish and bewildered vision of saints' and Virgin's shrines at the street corners—of great numbers of friars, monks, and soldiers-of vast red curtains waving in the doorways of the churches-of always going uphill, and yet seeing every other street and passage going higher up-of fruit-stalls, with fresh lemons and oranges hanging in garlands made of vine-leaves-of a guard-house and a drawbridge-and some gateways-and vendors of iced water, sitting with little trays upon the margin of the kennel-and this is all the consciousness I had, until I was set down in a rank, dull, weedy courtyard, attached to a kind of pink jail, and was told I lived there

I little thought that day that I should ever come to have an attachment for the very stones in the streets of Genoa, and to look back upon the city with affection as connected with many hours of happiness and quiet! But these are my first impressions honestly set down , and how they changed I will set down too. At present let us breathe after this long-winded journey

GENOA AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD

The first impressions of such a place as Albaro, the suburb of Genoa where I am now, as my American friends would say, "located," can hardly fail, I should imagine, to be mournful and disappointing. It requires a little time and use to overcome the feeling of depression consequent at first on so much ruin and neglect. Novelty, pleasant to most people, is particularly delightful, I think, to me. I am not easily dispirited when I have the means of pursuing my own fancies and occupations, and I believe I have some natural aptitude for accommodating myself to circumstances. But

as yet, I stroll about here, in all the holes and corners of the neighbourhood, in a perpetual state of forlorn surprise, and returning to my villa, the Villa Bagnerello (it sounds roman'ic, but Signor Bagnerello is a butcher hard by), have sufficient occupation in pondering over my new experiences, and comparing them, very much to my own amusement, with my

expectations, until I wander out again

The Villa Bagnerello—or the Pink Jail, a far more expressive name for the mansion—is in one of the most splendid situations imaginable The noble bay of Genoa, with the deep blue Mediterranean, hies stretched out near at hand. monstrous old desolate houses and palaces are dotted all about, lofty hills, with their tops often hidden in the clouds. and with strong forts perched high up on their craggy sides, are close upon the left, and in front, stretching from the walls of the house down to a ruined chapel which stands upon the bold and picturesque rocks on the sea-shore, are green vineyards, where you may wander all day long in partial shade, through interminable vistas of grapes, trained on a

rough trellis-work across the narrow paths.

This sequestered spot is approached by lanes so very narrow, that when we arrived at the Custom-house we found the people here had taken the measure of the narrowest among them, and were waiting to apply it to the carriage, which ceremony was gravely performed in the street, while we all stood by in breathless suspense It was found to be a very tight fit, but just a possibility, and no more—as I am reminded every day, by the sight of various large holes which it punched in the walls on either side as it came along are more fortunate, I am told, than an old lady who took a house in these parts not long ago, and who stuck fast in her carriage in a lane, and as it was impossible to open one of the doors, she was obliged to submit to the indignity of being hauled through one of the little front windows like a harlegum !

When you have got through these narrow lanes, you come to an archway, imperfectly stopped up by a rusty old gate—my gate. The rusty old gate has a bell to correspond, which you ring as long as you like, and which nobody answers, as it has no connection whatever with the house. But there is

a rusty old knocker, too-very loose, so that it slides round when you touch it-and if you learn the trick of it, and knock long enough, somebody comes The brave Courier comes, and gives you admittance You walk into a seedy little garden, all wild and weedy, from which the vineyard opens; cross it, enter a square hall like a cellar, walk up a cracked marble staircase, and pass into a most enormous room with a vaulted roof and whitewashed walls, not unlike a great Methodist chapel This is the sala It has five windows and five doors, and is decorated with pictures which would gladden the heart of one of those picture-cleaners in London who hang up, as a sign, a picture divided, like Death and the Lady at the top of the old ballad, which always leaves you in a state of uncertainty whether the ingenious professor has cleaned one half or dirtied the other The furniture of this sala is a sort of red brocade. All the chairs are immovable. and the sofa weighs several tons

On the same floor, and opening out of this same chamber, are dining-room, drawing-room, and divers bedrooms, each with a multiplicity of doors and windows. Upstairs are divers other gaunt chambers, and a kitchen, and downstairs is another kitchen, which, with all sorts of strange contrivances for burning charcoal, looks like an alchemical laboratory. There are also some half-dozen small sitting-rooms, where the servants in this hot July may escape from the heat of the fire, and where the brave Courier plays all sorts of musical instruments of his own manufacture all the evening long. A mighty old, wandering, ghostly, echoing, grim, bare house it is, as ever I beheld or thought of

There is a little vine covered terrace, opening from the drawing-room, and under this terrace, and forming one side of the little garden, is what used to be the stable. It is now a cow-house, and has three cows in it, so that we get new milk by the bucketful. There is no pasturage near, and they never go out, but are constantly lying down, and surfeiting themselves with vine-leaves—perfect Italian cows enjoying the dolae far nuente all day long. They are presided over, and slept with, by an old man named Antonio and his son—two burnt-sienna natives with naked legs and feet, who wear each a shirt, a pair of trousers, and a red sash, with a

relic, or some sacred charm like a bonbon off a Twelfth-cake, hanging round the neck. The old man is very anyious to convert me to the Catholic faith, and exhorts me frequently. We sit upon a stone by the door sometimes in the evening, like Robinson Crusoe and Friday reversed, and he generally relates, towards my conversion an abridgment of the History of Saint Peter—chiefly, I believe, from the unspeakable delight he has in his imitation of the cock

The view, as I have said, is charming, but in the day you must keep the lattice-blinds close shut, or the sun would drive you mad, and when the sun goes down you must shut up all the windows, or the mosquitoes would tempt you to commit suicide So at this time of the year you don't see much of the prospect within doors As for the flies, you don't mind them Nor the fleas, whose size is prodigious, and whose name is Legion, and who populate the coachhouse to that extent that I daily expect to see the carriage going off bodily, drawn by myriads of industrious fleas in harness The rats are kept away, quite comfortably, by scores of lean cats, who roam about the garden for that purpose The lizards, of course, nobody cares for, they play in the sun, and don't bite The little scorpions are merely curious The beetles are rather late, and have not appeared yet The frogs are company There is a preserve of them in the grounds of the next villa, and after nightfall one would think that scores upon scores of women in pattens were going up and down a wet stone pavement without a moment's cessation. That is exactly the noise they make

The runed chapel on the picturesque and beautiful seashore was dedicated, once upon a time, to Saint John the Baptist I believe there is a legend that Saint John's bones were received there with various solemnities when they were first brought to Genoa—for Genoa possesses them to this day. When there is any uncommon tempest at sea, they are brought out and exhibited to the raging weather, which they never fail to calm. In consequence of this connection of Saint John with the city, great numbers of the common people are christened Giovanni Baptista—which latter name is pronounced in the Genoese patois "Batcheetcha," like a sneeze. To hear everybody calling everybody else Batcheet.

cha, on a Sunday or festa-day, when there are crowds in the streets, is not a little singular and amusing to a stranger

The narrow lanes have great villas opening into them, whose walls (outside walls, I mean) are profusely painted with all sorts of subjects, grim and holy But time and the sea-air have nearly obliterated them, and they look like the entrance to Vauxhall Gardens on a sunny day The courtyards of these houses are overgrown with grass and weeds, all sorts of hideous patches cover the bases of the statues, as if they were afflicted with a cutaneous disorder, the outer gates are rusty, and the iron bars outside the lower windows are all tumbling down Firewood is kept in halls where costly treasures might be heaped up mountains high, waterfalls are dry and choked, fountains, too dull to play, and too lazy to work, have just enough recollection of their identity, in their sleep, to make the neighbourhood damp, and the sirocco wind is often blowing over all these things for days together, like a gigantic oven out for a holiday

Not long ago there was a festa-day in honour of the Virgin's mother, when the young men of the neighbourhood, having worn green wreaths of the vine in some procession or other, bathed in them by scores. It looked very odd and pretty, though I am bound to confess (not knowing of the festa at that time) that I thought, and was quite satisfied,

they wore them as horses do-to keep the flies off

Soon afterwards there was another festa-day, in honour of Saint Nazaro One of the Albaro young men brought two large bouquets soon after breakfast, and coming upstairs into the great sala, presented them himself This was a polite way of begging for a contribution towards the expenses of some music in the saint's honour, so we gave him whatever it may have been, and his messenger departed well satisfied. At six o'clock in the evening we went to the church—close at hand—a very gaudy place, hung all over with festoons and bright draperies, and filled, from the altar to the main door, with women, all seated They wear no bonnets here, simply a long white veil—the "mezzero," and it was the most gauzy, ethereal-looking audience I ever saw The young women are not generally pretty, but they walk remarkably well, and in their personal carriage and the management of

their veils display much innate grace and elegance. There were some men present—not very many—and a few of these were kneeling about the aisles, while every body else tumbled over them. Innumerable tapers were burning in the church, the bits of silver and tin about the saints (especially in the Virgin's necklace) sparkled brilliantly, the priests were seated about the chief altar, the organ played away lustily, and a full band did the like, while a conductor, in a little gallery opposite to the band, hammered away on the desk before him with a scroll, and a tenor without any voice sang. The band played one way, the organ played another, the singer went a third, and the unfortunate conductor banged and banged and flourished his scroll on some principle of his own, apparently well satisfied with the whole performance I never did hear such a discordant din. The heat was intense all the time.

The men, in red caps and with loose coats hanging on their shoulders (they never put them on), were playing bowls and buying sweetmeats immediately outside the church When half a dozen of them finished a game, they came into the aisle, crossed themselves with the holy water, knelt on one knee for an instant, and walked off again to play another game at bowls They are remarkably expert at this diversion, and will play in the stony lanes and streets, and on the most uneven and disastrous ground for such a purpose, with as much nicety as on a billiard-table. But the most favourite game is the national one of Mora, which they pursue with surprising ardour, and at which they will stake everything they possess. It is a destructive kind of gambling, requiring no accessories but the ten fingers, which are always (I intend no pun) at hand Two men play together One calls a number-say the extreme one, ten He marks what portion of it he pleases by throwing out three, or four, or five fingers, and his adversary has in the same instant, at hazard, and without seeing his hand, to throw out as many fingers as will make the exact balance Their eyes and hands become so used to this, and act with such astonishing rapidity, that an uninitiated bystander would find it very difficult, if not impossible, to follow the progress of the game. The initiated, however, of whom there is always an eager group

looking on, devour it with the most intense avidity, and as they are always ready to champion one side or the other in case of a dispute, and are frequently divided in their partisanship, it is often a very noisy proceeding. It is never the quietest game in the world, for the numbers are always called in a loud, sharp voice, and follow as close upon each other as they can be counted On a holiday evening, standing at a window, or walking in a garden, or passing through the streets, or sauntering in any quiet place about the town, you will hear this game in progress in a score of wineshops at once, and looking over any vineyard walk, or turning almost any corner, will come upon a knot of players in full cry is observable that most men have a propensity to throw out some particular number oftener than another, and the vigilance with which two sharp-eyed players will mutually endeavour to detect this weakness, and adapt their game to it, is very curious and entertaining. The effect is greatly heightened by the universal suddenness and vehemence of gesture—two men playing for half a farthing with an intensity as all-absorbing as if the stake were life

Hard by here is a large palazzo, formerly belonging to some member of the Brignole family, but just now hired by a school of Jesuits for their summer quarters. I walked into its dismantled precincts the other evening about sunset, and couldn't help pacing up and down for a little time, drowsily taking in the aspect of the place—which is repeated hereabouts in all directions

I loitered to and fro under a colonnade forming two sides of a weedy, grass-grown courtyard, whereof the house formed a third side, and a low terrace-walk, overlooking the garden and the neighbouring hills, the fourth I don't believe there was an uncracked stone in the whole pavement. In the centre was a melancholy statue, so piebald in its decay that it looked exactly as if it had been covered with sticking-plaster and afterwards powdered The stables, coach-houses, offices were all empty, all ruinous, all utterly deserted

Doors had lost their hinges, and were holding on by their latches, windows were broken, painted plaster had peeled off, and was lying about in clods, fowls and cats had so taken possession of the out-buildings, that I couldn't help

thinking of the fairy tales, and eyeing them with suspicion as transformed retainers waiting to be changed back again One old Tom in particular—a scraggy brute, with a hungry green eye (a poor relation, in reality, I am inclined to think)—came prowling round and round me, as if he half believed for the moment that I might be the hero come to marry the lady and set all to rights, but discovering his mistake, he suddenly gave a grim snarl, and walked away with such a tremendous tail that he couldn't get into the little hole where he lived, but was obliged to wait outside until his indignation and his tail had gone down together

In a sort of summer-house (or whatever it may be) in this colonnade, some Englishmen had been living, like grubs in a nut, but the Jesuits had given them notice to go, and they had gone, and that was shut up too The house—a wandering, echoing, thundering barrack of a place, with the lower windows barred up, as usual—was wide open at the door, and I have no doubt I might have gone in, and gone to bed, and gone dead, and nobody a bit the wiser Only one suite of rooms, on an upper floor, was tenanted, and from one of these the voice of a young lady vocalist, practising bravura

lustily, came flaunting out upon the silent evening

I went down into the garden—intended to be prim and quaint, with avenues, and terraces, and orange-trees, and statues, and water in stone basins—and everything was grim, gaunt, weedy, straggling, undergrown or overgrown, mildewy, damp, redolent of all sorts of slabby, clammy, creeping, and uncomfortable life. There was nothing bright in the whole scene but a firefly—one solitary firefly—showing against the dark bushes like the last little speck of the departed Glory of the house, and even it went flitting up and down at sudden angles, and leaving a place with a jerk, and describing an irregular circle, and returning to the same place with a twitch that startled one—as if it were looking for the rest of the Glory, and wondering (Heaven knows it might') what had become of it

In the course of two months the flitting shapes and shadows of my dismal entering reverie gradually resolved themselves into familiar forms and substances, and I already

began to think that when the time should come, a year hence, for closing the long holiday and turning back to England, I might part from Genoa with anything but a glad heart

It is a place that "grows upon you" every day There seems to be always something to find out in it. There are the most extraordinary alleys and byways to walk about in You can lose your way (what a comfort that is when you are idle!) twenty times a day if you like, and turn up again under the most unexpected and surprising difficulties. It abounds in the strangest contrasts—things that are picturesque, ugly, mean, magnificent, delightful, and offensive

break upon the view at every turn

They who would know how beautiful the country immediately surrounding Genoa is should climb (in clear weather) to the top of Mount Faccio, or at least ride round the city walls-a feat more easily performed No prospect can be more diversified and lovely than the changing views of the harbour and the valleys of the two rivers, the Polcevera and the Bizagno, from the heights along which the stronglyfortified walls are carried, like the Great Wall of China in In not the least picturesque part of this ride there is little a fair specimen of a real Genoese tavern, where the visitor may derive good entertainment from real Genoese dishes, such as Tagliarini, Ravioli, German sausages, strong of garlic, sliced and eaten with fresh green figs, cocks' combs and sheep-kidneys, chopped up with mutton-chops and liver, small pieces of some unknown part of a calf, twisted into small shreds, fried, and served up in a great dish like whitebait, and other curiosities of that kind They often get wine at these suburban trattorie from France and Spain and Portugal, which is brought over by small captains in little trading-vessels They buy it at so much a bottle, without asking what it is, or caring to remember if anybody tells them, and usually divide it into two heaps, of which they label one Champagne and the other Madeira The various opposite flavours, qualities, countries, ages, and vintages that are comprised under these two general heads is quite extraordinary The most limited range is probably from cool gruel up to old Marsala, and down again to apple-tea.

The great majority of the streets are as narrow as any thoroughfare can well be where people (even Italian people) are supposed to live and walk about, being mere lanes, with here and there a kind of well, or breathing-place The houses are immensely high, painted in all sorts of colours, and are in every stage and state of damage, dirt, and lack of They are commonly let off in floors or flats, like the houses in the old town of Edinburgh, or many houses in Paris There are few street doors, the entrance halls are. for the most part, looked upon as public property, and any moderately-enterprising scavenger might make a fine fortune by now and then clearing them out As it is impossible for coaches to penetrate into these streets, there are sedan-chairs, gilded and otherwise, for hire in divers places A great many private chairs are also kept among the nobility and gentry. and at night these are trotted to and fro in all directions, preceded by bearers of great lanthorns made of linen stretched upon a frame The sedans and lanthorns are the legitimate successors of the long strings of patient and muchabused mules, that go jingling their little bells through these confined streets all day long They follow them as regularly as the stars the sun

When shall I forget the streets of palaces—the Strada Nuova and the Strada Balbi! or how the former looked one summer day when I first saw it underneath the brightest and most intensely blue of summer skies, which its narrow perspective of immense mansions reduced to a tapering and most precious strip of brightness looking down upon the heavy shade below! A brightness not too common, even in July and August, to be well esteemed, for, if the truth must out, there were not eight blue skies in as many midsummer weeks—saving sometimes early in the moining, when, looking out to sea, the water and the firmament were one world of deep and brilliant blue. At other times there were clouds and haze enough to make an Englishman grumble in his own climate.

The endless details of these rich palaces—the walls of some of them, within, alive with masterpieces by Vandyke—the great heavy stone balcomes, one above another, and tier over tier, with here and there one larger than the rest tower-

ing high up—a huge marble platform, the doorless vestibules, massively-barred lower windows, immense public staircases, thick marble pillars, strong dungeon-like arches, and dreary, dreaming, echoing vaulted chambers, among which the eye wanders again and again and again, as every palace is succeeded by another, the terrace-gardens between house and house, with green arches of the vine, and groves of orangetrees, and blushing oleander in full bloom, twenty, thirty, forty feet above the street, the painted halls, mouldering, and blotting, and rotting in the damp corners, and still shining out in beautiful colours and voluptuous designs where the walls are dry, the faded figures on the outsides of the houses, holding wreaths and crowns, and flying upward and downward, and standing in niches, and here and there looking fainter and more feeble than elsewhere by contrast with some fresh little cupids, who, on a more recently decorated portion of the front, are stretching out what seems to be the semblance of a blanket, but is, indeed, a sun-dial, the steep, steep, uphill streets of small palaces (but very large palaces for all that), with marble terraces looking down into close byways, the magnificent and innumerable churches, and the rapid passage from a street of stately edifices into a maze of the vilest squalor, steaming with unwholesome stenches, and swarming with half-naked children and whole worlds of dirty people, -make up, altogether, such a scene of wonderso lively, and yet so dead, so noisy, and yet so quiet, so obtrusive, and yet so shy and lowering, so wide awake, and yet so fast asleep-that it is a sort of intoxication to a stranger to walk on and on and on, and look about him a bewildering phantasmagoria, with all the inconsistency of a dream, and all the pain and all the pleasure of an extravagant reality

The different uses to which some of these palaces are applied all at once is characteristic. For instance, the English Banker (my excellent and hospitable friend) has his office in a good-sized palazzo in the Strada Nuova. In the hall (every inch of which is elaborately painted, but which is as dirty as a police-station in London), a hooknosed Saracen's Head with an immense quantity of black hair (there is a man attached to it) sells walking-sticks. On

the other side of the doorway, a lady with a showy handkerchief for head-dress (wife to the Saracen's Head I believe) sells articles of her own knitting, and sometimes flowers A little farther in two or three blind men occasionally beg Sometimes they are visited by a man without legs, on a little go-cart, but who has such a fresh-coloured, lively face, and such a respectable, well-conditioned body, that he looks as if he had sunk into the ground up to his middle, or had come but partially up a flight of cellar-steps to speak to somebody A little farther in a few men perhaps lie asleep in the middle of the day, or they may be chairmen waiting for their absent freight. If so, they have brought their chairs in with them, and there they stand also On the left of the hall is a little room—a hatters shop On the first floor is the English bank On the first floor, also, is a whole house, and a good large residence too Heaven knows what there may be above that, but when you are there, you have only just begun to go upstairs And yet, coming downstairs again, thinking of this, and passing out at a great crazy door in the back of the hall, instead of turning the other way, to get into the street again, it bangs behind you, making the dismallest and most lonesome echoes, and you stand in a yard (the yard of the same house) which seems to have been unvisited by human foot for a hundred years Not a sound disturbs its repose Not a head thrust out of any of the grim, dark, jealous windows within sight makes the weeds in the cracked pavement faint of heart, by suggesting the possibility of there being hands to grub them up Opposite to you is a giant figure carved in stone, reclining, with an urn, upon a lofty piece of artificial rockwork, and out of the urn dangles the fag end of a leaden pipe, which once upon a time poured a small torrent down the rocks But the eye-sockets of the giant are not drier than this channel is now He seems to have given his urn, which is nearly upside down, a final tilt, and after crying like a sepulchral child, "All gone! 'to have lapsed into a stony silence

In the streets of shops, the houses are much smaller, but of great size notwithstanding, and extremely high. They are very dirty—quite undrained, if my nose be at all reliable—and emit a peculiar fragrance, like the smell of very bad cheese kept in very hot blankets. Notwithstanding the height of the houses, there would seem to have been a lack of room in the city, for new houses are thrust in everywhere Wherever it has been possible to cram a tumbledown tenement into a crack or corner, in it has gone there be a nook or angle in the wall of a church, or a crevice in any other dead wall of any sort, there you are sure to find some kind of habitation-looking as if it had grown there, like a fungus Against the Government House, against the old Senate House, round about any large building, little shops stick close, like parasite vermin to the great carcass And for all this, look where you may—up steps, down steps, anywhere, everywhere—there are irregular houses, receding, starting forward, tumbling down, leaning against their neighbours, crippling themselves or their friends by some means or other, until one, more irregular than the rest, chokes up the way, and you can't see any further

One of the rottenest-looking parts of the town, I think, is down by the landing-wharf, though it may be that its being associated with a great deal of rottenness on the evening of our arrival has stamped it deeper in my mind Here, again, the houses are very high, and are of an infinite variety of deformed shapes, and have (as most of the houses have) something hanging out of a great many windows, and wafting its frowzy fragrance on the breeze. Sometimes it is a curtain, sometimes it is a carpet, sometimes it is a bed, sometimes a whole lineful of clothes, but there is almost always something Before the basement of these houses is an arcade over the pavement-very massive, dark, and low, like an old crypt. The stone or plaster of which it is made has turned quite black, and against every one of these black piles, all sorts of filth and garbage seem to accumulate spontaneously Beneath some of the arches, the sellers of macaroni and polenta establish their stalls, which are by no means inviting The offal of a fish-market near at handthat is to say, of a back lane, where people sit upon the ground, and on various old bulk-heads and sheds, and sell fish when they have any to dispose of-and of a vegetablemarket, constructed on the same principle, are contributed to the decoration of this quarter, and as all the mercantile

business is transacted here, and it is crowded all day, it has a very decided flavour about it. The Porto Franco, or Free Port (where goods brought in from foreign countries pay no duty until they are sold and taken out, as in a bonded warehouse in England), is down here also, and two portentous officials in cocked hats stand at the gate to search you if they choose, and to keep out Monks and Ladies For Sancity as well as Beauty has been known to yield to the temptation of smuggling, and in the same way—that is to say, by concealing the smuggled property beneath the loose folds of its dress. So Sancity and Beauty may, by no means, enter

The streets of Genoa would be all the better for the importation of a few Priests of prepossessing appearance Every fourth or fifth man in the streets is a Priest or a Monk, and there is pretty sure to be at least one itinerant ecclesiastic inside or outside every hackney carriage on the neighbouring roads. I have no knowledge, elsewhere, of more repulsive countenances than are to be found among these gentry. If Nature's handwriting be at all legible, greater varieties of sloth, deceit, and intellectual torpor could hardly be observed among any class of men in the world

MR PEPYS once heard a clergyman assert in his sermon, in illustration of his respect for the Priestly office, that if he could meet a Priest and angel together, he would salute the Priest first. I am rather of the opinion of Petrarch, who, when his pupil Boccaccio wrote to him in great tribulation that he had been visited and admonished for his writings by a Carthusian Friar who claimed to be a messenger immediately commissioned by Heaven for that purpose, replied, that for his own part he would take the liberty of testing the reality of the commission by personal observation of the Messenger's face, eyes, forehead, behaviour, and discourse I cannot but believe myself, from similar observation, that many unaccredited celestial messengers may be seen skulking through the streets of Genoa, or droning away their lives in other Italian towns

Perhaps the Cappuccin, though not a learned body, are, as an order, the best friends of the people. They seem to mingle with them more immediately, as their counsellors and

comforters, and to go among them more when they are sick, and to pry less than some other orders into the secrets of families, for the purpose of establishing a baleful ascendency over their weaker members, and to be influenced by a less fierce desire to make converts, and once made, to let them go to ruin, soul and body. They may be seen, in their coarse dress, in all parts of the town at all times, and begging in the markets early in the morning. The Jesuits, too, muster strong in the streets, and go slinking noiselessly about, in pairs, like black cats

In some of the narrow passages distinct trades congregate There is a street of jewellers, and there is a row of booksellers, but even down in places where nobody ever can, or ever could, penetrate in a carriage, there are mighty old palaces shut in among the gloomiest and closest walls, and almost shut out from the sun. Very few of the tradesmen have any idea of setting forth their goods, or disposing them for show. If you, a stranger, want to buy anything, you usually look round the shop till you see it, then clutch it, if it be within reach, and inquire how much. Everything is sold at the most unlikely place. If you want coffee, you go to a sweetmeat shop, and if you want meat, you will probably find it behind an old checked curtain, down half a dozen steps, in some sequestered nook, as hard to find as if the commodity were poison, and Genoa's law were death to any that uttered it

Most of the apothecaries' shops are great lounging-places. Here grave men with sticks sit down in the shade for hours together, passing a meagre Genoa paper from hand to hand, and talking drowsily and sparingly about the news. Two or three of these are poor physicians, ready to proclaim themselves on an emergency, and tear off with any messenger who may arrive. You may know them by the way in which they stretch their necks to listen when you enter, and by the sigh with which they fall back again into their dull corners on finding that you only want medicine. Few people lounge in the barbers' shops, though they are very numerous, as hardly any man shaves himself. But the apothecary's has its group of loungers, who sit back among the bottles, with their hands folded over the tops of their sticks, so still and

quiet that either you don't see them in the darkened shop, or mistake them—as I did one ghostly man in bottle green, one day, with a hat like a stopper—for Horse Medicine

On a summer evening the Genoese are as fond of putting themselves, as their ancestors were of putting houses, in every available inch of space in and about the town. In all the lanes and alleys, and up every little ascent, and on every dwarf wall, and on every flight of steps, they cluster like bees Meanwhile (and especially on festa-days) the bells of the churches ring incessantly, not in peals, or any known form of sound, but in a horrible, irregular, jerking, dingle, dingle, dingle—with a sudden stop at every fifteenth dingle or so, which is maddening. This performance is usually achieved by a boy up in the steeple, who takes hold of the clapper, or a little rope attached to it, and tries to dingle louder than every other boy similarly employed. The noise is supposed to be particularly obnoxious to Evil Spirits, but looking up into the steeples, and seeing (and hearing) these young Christians thus engaged, one might very naturally mistake them for the Enemy

Festa-days early in the autumn are very numerous All the shops were shut up twice within a week for these holidays, and one night all the houses in the neighbourhood of a particular church were illuminated, while the church itself was lighted outside with torches, and a grove of blazing links was erected in an open place outside one of the city gates. This part of the ceremony is prettier and more singular a little way in the country, where you can trace the illuminated cottages all the way up a steep hill-side, and where you pass festoons of tapers, wasting away in the starlight night, before some lonely little house upon the road

On these days they always dress the church of the saint in whose honour the festa is holden very gaily Gold-embroidered festoons of different colours hang from the arches, the altar furniture is set forth, and sometimes even the lofty pillars are swathed from top to bottom in tight-fitting draperies. The cathedral is dedicated to St. Lorenzo. On St. Lorenzo's day we went into it just as the sun was setting Although these decorations are usually in very indifferent.

taste, the effect just then was very superb indeed; for the whole building was dressed in red, and the sinking sun, streaming in through a great red curtain in the chief doorway, made all the gorgeousness its own. When the sun went down, and it gradually grew quite dark inside, except for a few twinkling tapers on the principal altar, and some small dangling silver lamps, it was very mysterious and effective But sitting in any of the churches towards evening is like a mild dose of opium

With the money collected at a festa they usually pay for the dressing of the church, and for the hiring of the band, and for the tapers. If there be any left (which seldom happens, I believe), the souls in Purgatory get the benefit of it. They are also supposed to have the benefit of the exertions of certain small boys, who shake money-boxes before some mysterious little buildings like rural turnpikes, which (usually shut up close) fly open on Red-letter days, and disclose an image and some flowers inside

Just without the city gate, on the Albara road, is a small house, with an altar in it, and a stationary money-box, also for the benefit of the souls in Purgatory Still further to stimulate the charitable, there is a monstrous painting on the plaster, on either side of the grated door, representing a select party of souls frying. One of them has a grey moustache, and an elaborate head of grey hair! as if it had been taken out of a hairdresser's window and cast into the furnace. There he is, a most grotesque and hideously comic old soul, for ever blistering in the real sun, and melting in the mimic fire, for the gratification and improvement (and the contributions) of the poorer Genoese

They are not a very joyous people, and are seldom seen to dance on their holicays, the staple places of entertainment among the women being the churches and the public walks. They are very good-tempered, obliging, and industrious. Industry has not made them clean, for their habitations are extremely filthy, and their usual occupation on a fine Sunday morning is to sit at their doors hunting in each other's heads. But their dwellings are so close and confined that if those parts of the city had been beaten down by Massena in the time of the terrible Blockade, it would have

at least occasioned one public benefit among many misfortunes

The Peasant Women, with naked feet and legs, are so constantly washing clothes in the public tanks, and in every stream and ditch, that one cannot help wondering, in the midst of all this dirt, who wears them when they are clean The custom is to lay the wet linen which is being operated upon, on a smooth stone, and hammer away at it with a flat wooden mallet This they do as furiously as if they were revenging themselves on dress in general for being connected with the Fall of Mankind

It is not unusual to see, lying on the edge of the tank at these times, or on another flat stone, an unfortunate baby, tightly swathed up, arms and legs and all, in an enormous quantity of wrapper, so that it is unable to move a toe or finger This custom (which we often see represented in old pictures) is universal among the common people A child is left anywhere without the possibility of crawling away, or is accidentally knocked off a shelf, or tumbled out of bed, or is hung up to a hook now and then, and left dangling like a doll at an English ragshop, without the least inconvenience to anybody

I was sitting one Sunday, soon after my arrival, in the little country church of San Martino, a couple of miles from the city, while a baptism took place I saw the priest, and an attendant with a large taper, and a man, and a woman, and some others, but I had no more idea, until the ceremony was all over, that it was a baptism, or that the curious little stiff instrument that was passed from one to another in the course of the ceremony, by the handle—like a short poker—was a child, than I had that it was my own christening I borrowed the child afterwards for a minute or two (it was lying across the font then), and found it very red in the face, but perfectly quiet, and not to be bent on any terms The number of cripples in the streets soon ceased to surprise me

There are plenty of Saints' and Virgin's Shrines, of course, generally at the corners of streets The favourite memento to the Faithful, about Genoa, is a painting representing a peasant on his knees, with a spade and some other agri-

cultural implements beside him, and the Madonna, with the Infant Saviour in her arms, appearing to him in a cloud This is the legend of the Madonna della Guardia, a chapel on a mountain within a few miles, which is in high repute It seems that this peasant lived all alone by himself, tilling some land atop of the mountain, where, being a devout man, he daily said his prayers to the Virgin in the open air for his hut was a very poor one Upon a certain day, the Virgin appeared to him, as in the picture, and said, "Why do you pray in the open air, and without a priest?" The peasant explained because there was neither priest nor church at hand—a very uncommon complaint indeed in Italy "I should wish, then," said the Celestial Visitor, "to have a chapel built here, in which the prayers of the Faithful may be offered up " "But, Santissima Madonna," said the peasant, "I am a poor man, and chapels cannot be built without money They must be supported, too, Santissima, for to have a chapel and not support it liberally is a wickedness a deadly sin ' This sentiment gave great satisfaction to the "Go!" said she "There is such a village in the valley on the left, and such another village in the valley on the right, and such another village elsewhere, that will gladly contribute to the building of a chapel Go to them! Relate what you have seen, and do not doubt that sufficient money will be forthcoming to erect my chapel, or that it will, afterwards, be handsomely maintained " All of which (miraculously) turned out to be quite true And in proof of this prediction and revelation, there is the chapel of the Madonna della Guardia, rich and flourishing at this day

The splendour and variety of the Genoese churches can hardly be exaggerated. The Church of the Annunciata especially—built, like many of the others, at the cost of one noble family, and now in slow progress of repair—from the outer door to the utmost height of the high cupola, is so elaborately painted and set in gold, that it looks (as Simond describes it, in his charming book on Italy) like a great enamelled snuff-box. Most of the richer churches contain some beautiful pictures, or other embellishments of great price, almost universally set side by side with sprawling effigies of maudlin monks, and the veriest trash and tinsel ever seen.

It may be a consequence of the frequent direction of the popular mind, and pocket, to the souls in Purgatory, but there is very little tenderness for the bodies of the dead here. For the very poor, there are, immediately outside one angle of the walls, and behind a jutting point of the fortification, near the sea, certain common pits—one for every day in the year—which all remain closed up, until the turn of each comes for its daily reception of dead bodies. Among the troops in the town, there are usually some Swiss, more or less. When any of these die, they are buried out of a fund maintained by such of their countrymen as are resident in Genoa. Their providing coffins for these men is matter of great astonishment to the authorities.

Certainly the effect of this promiscuous and indecent splashing down of dead people into so many wells is bad. It surrounds Death with revolting associations, that insensibly become connected with those whom Death is approaching Indifference and avoidance are the natural result, and all the softening influences of the great sorrow are harshly

disturbed

There is a ceremony, when an old Cavalière or the like expires, of erecting a pile of benches in the cathedral, to represent his bier, covering them over with a pall of black velvet, putting his hat and sword on the top, making a little square of seats about the whole, and sending out formal invitations to his friends and acquaintances to come and sit there, and hear Mass, which is performed at the principal altar, decorated with an infinity of candles for that purpose

When the better kind of people die, or are at the point of death, their nearest relations generally walk off—retiring into the country for a little change, and leaving the body to be disposed of, without any superintendence from them. The procession is usually formed, and the coffin borne, and the funeral conducted, by a body of persons called a Confraternita, who, as a kind of voluntary penance, undertake to perform these offices, in regular rotation, for the dead, but who, mingling something of pride with their humility, are dressed in a loose garment covering their whole person, and wear a hood concealing the face, with breathing holes and apertures for the eyes. The effect of this costume is very

ghastly, especially in the case of a certain Blue Confraternita belonging to Genoa, who, to say the least of them, are very ugly customers, and who look—suddenly encountered in their pious ministration in the streets—as if they were Ghouls or

Demons, bearing off the body for themselves

Although such a custom may be liable to the abuse attendant on many Italian customs, of being recognized as a means of establishing a current account with Heaven, on which to draw, too easily, for future bad actions, or as an expiation for past misdeeds, it must be admitted to be a good one, and a practical one, and one involving unquestionably good works. A voluntary service like this is surely better than the imposed penance (not at all an infrequent one) of giving so many licks to such and such a stone in the pavement of the cathedral, or than a vow to the Madonna to wear nothing but blue for a year or two. This is supposed to give great delight above, blue being (as is well known) the Madonna's favourite colour. Women who have devoted themselves to this act of Faith are very commonly seen walking in the streets.

There are three theatres in the city, besides an old one now rarely opened. The most important—the Carlo Felice, the opera-house of Genoa—is a very splendid, commodious, and beautiful theatre. A company of comedians were acting there when we arrived, and after their departure a second-rate opera company came. The great season is not until the Carnival time, in the spring. Nothing impressed me so much, in my visits here (which were pretty numerous), as the uncommonly hard and cruel character of the audience, who resent the slightest defect, take nothing good-humouredly, seem to be always lying in wait for an opportunity to hiss, and spare the actresses as little as the actors. But, as there is nothing else of a public nature at which they are allowed to express the least disapprobation, perhaps they are resolved to make the most of this opportunity

There are a great number of Predmontese officers too, who are allowed the privilege of kicking their heels in the pit for next to nothing—gratuitous, or cheap accommodation for these gentlemen being insisted on, by the Governor, in all public or semi-public entertainments. They are lofty critics

in consequence, and infinitely more exacting than if they made the unhappy manager's fortune

The TEATRO DIURNO, or Day Theatre, is a covered stage in the open air, where the performances take place by dayight, in the cool of the afternoon, commencing at four or five o'clock, and lasting some three hours It is curious, sitting among the audience, to have a fine view of the neighbouring hills and houses, and to see the neighbours at their windows looking on, and to hear the bells of the churches and convents ringing at most complete cross purposes with the scene. Beyond this, and the novelty of seeing a play in the fresh pleasant air, with the darkening evening closing in, there is nothing very exciting or characteristic in the performances The actors are indifferent, and though they sometimes represent one of Goldoni's comedies, the staple of the Drama is French Anything like nationality is dangerous to despotic governments and Jesuit-beleaguered kings

The Theatre of Puppets, or Marionetti-a famous company from Milan-is, without any exception, the drollest exhibition I ever beheld in my life I never saw anything so exquisitely ridiculous They look between four and five feet high, but are really much smaller, for when a musician in the orchestra happens to put his hat on the stage, it becomes alarmingly gigantic, and almost blots out an actor They usually play a comedy, and a ballet The comic man in the comedy I saw one summer night, is a waiter at an hotel There never was such a locomotive actor since the world began Great pains are taken with him extra joints in his legs, and a practical eye, with which he winks at the pit, in a manner that is absolutely insupportable to a stranger, but which the initiated audience, mainly composed of the common people, receive (so they do everything else) quite as a matter of course, and as if he were a man. His spirits are prodigious He continually shakes his legs. and winks his eye And there is a heavy father with grey hair, who sits down on the regular conventional stage-bank. and blesses his daughter in the regular conventional way, who is tremendous No one would suppose it possible that anything short of a real man could be so tedious. It is the triumph of art.

In the ballet, an Enchanter runs away with the Bride, in the very hour of her nuptials He brings her to his cave, and tries to soothe her They sit down on a sofa (the regular sofa! in the regular place, OP Second Entrance!), and a procession of musicians enters—one creature playing a drum, and knocking himself off his legs at every blow. These failing to delight her, dancers appear Four first, then twothe two, the flesh-coloured two The way in which they dance, the height to which they spring, the impossible and inhuman extent to which they pirouette, the revelation of their preposterous legs, the coming down with a pause, on the very tips of their toes, when the music requires it, he gentleman's retiring up, when it is the lady's turn, and the lady's retiring up, when it is the gentleman's turn, the final passion of a pas-de-deux, and the going off with a bound !-I shall never see a real ballet with a composed countenance agaın

I went, another night, to see these Puppets act a play called "St. Helena, or the Death of Napoleon" It began by the disclosure of Napoleon, with an immense head, seated on a sofa in his chamber at St Helena, to whom his valet

entered with this obscure announcement,-

"Sir Yew ud se on Low?" (the ow, as in cow)

Sir Hudson (that you could have seen his regimentals!) was a perfect mammoth of a man to Napoleon-hideously ugly, with a monstrously disproportionate face, and a great clump for the lower-jaw, to express his tyrannical and obdurate nature He began his system of persecution, by calling his prisoner "General Buonaparte," to which the latter replied, with the deepest tragedy, "Sir Yew ud se on Low, call me not thus Repeat that phrase, and leave me! I am Napoleon, Emperor of France i" Sir Yew ud se on, nothing daunted, proceeded to entertain him with an ordinance of the British Government, regulating the state he should preserve, and the furniture of his rooms, and limiting his attendants to four or five persons "Four or five for me!" said Napoleon "Me! One hundred thousand men were lately at my sole command, and this English officer talks of four or five for me!" Throughout the piece, Napoleon (who talked very like the real Napoleon, and was for ever having

small soldioquies by himself) was very bitter on "these English officers," and "these English soldiers," to the great satisfaction of the audience, who were perfectly delighted to have Low bullied, and who, whenever Low said, "General Buonaparte" (which he always did—always receiving the same correction), quite execrated him It would be hard to say why, for Italian have little cause to sympathize with

Napoleon, Heaven knows

There was no plot at all, except that a French officer, disguised as an Englishman, came to propound a plan of escape, and being discovered, but not before Napoleon had magnanimously refused to steal his freedom, was immediately ordered off by Low to be hanged—in two very long speeches, which Low made memorable by winding up with "Yas!"—to show that he was English—which brought down thunders of applause. Napoleon was so affected by this catastrophe, that he fainted away on the spot, and was carried out by two other puppets Judging from what followed, it would appear that he never recovered the shock, for the next act showed hum, in a clean shirt, in his bed (curtains crimson and white), where a lady, prematurely dressed in mourning, brought two little children, who kneeled down by the bedside, while he made a decent end, the last word on his lips being "Vatterlo"

It was unspeakably ludicrous Buonaparte's boots were so wonderfully beyond control, and did such marvellous things of their own accord—doubling themselves up, and getting under tables, and dangling in the air, and sometimes skating away with him, out of all human knowledge, when he was in full speech-mischances which were not rendered the less absurd by a settled melancholy depicted in his face. To put an end to one conference with Low, he had to go to a table and read a book—when it was the finest spectacle I ever beheld, to see his body bending over the volume, like a boot-jack, and his sentimental eyes glaring obstinately into the pit He was prodigiously good, in bed, with an immense collar to his shirt, and his little hands outside the coverlet So was Dr Antommarchi, represented by a puppet with long lank hair, like Mawworm's, who, in consequence of some derangement of his wires, hovered about the couch like a vulture, and gave medical opinions in the air He was almost as good as Low, though the latter was great at all times—a decided brute and villain, beyond all possibility of mistake. Low was especially fine at the last, when, hearing the doctor and the valet say, "The Emperor is dead b" he pulled out his watch, and wound up the piece (not the watch) by exclaiming, with characteristic brutality, "Ha! ha! Eleven minutes to six! The General dead! and the spy hanged!" This brought the curtain down triumphantly

There is not in Italy, they say (and I believe them), a lovelier residence than the Palazzo Peschiere, or Palace of the Fishponds, whither we removed as soon as our three months' tenancy of the Pink Jail at Albaro had ceased and determined

It stands on a height within the walls of Genoa, but aloof from the town, surrounded by beautiful gardens of its own, adorned with statues, vases, fountains, marble basins, terraces, walks of orange-trees and lemon-trees, groves of roses and camellias. All its apartments are beautiful in their proportions and decorations, but the great hall, some fifty feet in height, with three large windows at the end, overlooking the whole town of Genoa, the harbour, and the neighbouring sea, affords one of the most fascinating and delightful prospects in the world. Any house more cheerful and habitable than the great rooms are, within, it would be difficult to conceive, and certainly nothing more delicious than the scene without, in sunshine or in moonlight, could be imagined. It is more like an enchanted palace in an Eastern story than a grave and sober lodging.

How you may wander on, from room to room, and never tire of the wild fancies on the walls and ceilings, as bright in their fresh colouring as if they had been painted yesterday, or how one floor, or even the great hall which opens on eight other rooms, is a spacious promenade, or how there are corridors and bed-chambers above, which we never use and rarely visit, and scarcely know the way through, or how there is a view of a perfectly different character on each of the four sides of the building, matters little But that prospect from the hall is like a vision to me. I go back to it,

in fancy, as I have done in calm reality a hundred times a day, and stand there, looking out, with the sweet scents from the garden rising up about me, in a perfect dream of

happiness

There lies all Genoa, in beautiful confusion, with its many churches, monasteries, and convents pointing up into the sunny sky, and down below me, just where the roofs begin, a solitary convent parapet, fashioned like a gallery, with an iron cross at the end, where sometimes, early in the morning, I have seen a little group of dark-veiled nuns gliding sorrowfully to and fro, and stopping now and then to peep down upon the waking world in which they have no part Old Monte Faccio, brightest of hills in good weather, but sulkiest when storms are coming on, is here upon the left The Fort within the walls (the good King built it to command the town, and beat the houses of the Genoese about their ears, in case they should be discontented) commands that height upon the right The broad sea lies beyond, in front there, and that line of coast, beginning by the lighthouse, and tapering away a mere speck in the rosy distance, is the beautiful coast road that leads to Nice The garden near at hand, among the roofs and houses, all red with roses and fresh with little fountains, is the Acqua Sola-a public promenade, where the military band plays gaily, and the white veils cluster thick, and the Genoese nobility ride round, and round, and round, in state-clothes and coaches at least, if not in absolute wisdom. Within a stone's-throw, as it seems, the audience of the Day Theatre sit, their faces turned this way But as the stage is hidden, it is very odd, without a knowledge of the cause, to see their faces changed so suddenly from earnestness to laughter, and odder still, to hear the rounds upon rounds of applause, rattling in the evening air, to which the curtain falls But, being Sunday night, they act their best and most attractive play And now the sun is going down, in such magnificent array of red, and green, and golden light, as neither pen nor pencil could depict, and to the ringing of the vesper bells, darkness sets in at once, without a twilight Then lights begin to shine in Genoa, and on the country road, and the revolving lanthorn out at sea there, flashing, for an instant.

on this palace front and portico, illuminates it as if there were a bright moon bursting from behind a cloud, then merges it in deep obscurity. And this, so far as I know, is the only reason why the Genoese avoid it after dark, and think it haunted

My memory will haunt it, many nights, in time to come, but nothing worse, I will engage — The same Ghost will occasionally sail away, as I did one pleasant autumn evening, into the bright prospect, and snuff the morning air at Marseilles.

The corpulent hairdresser was still sitting in his slippers outside his shop-door there, but the twirling ladies in the window, with the natural inconstancy of their sex, had ceased to twirl, and were languishing, stock-still, with their beautiful faces addressed to blind corners of the establishment, where it was impossible for admirers to penetrate

The steamer had come from Genoa in a delicious run of eighteen hours, and we were going to run back again by the Cornice road from Nice—not being satisfied to have seen only the outsides of the beautiful towns that rise in picturesque white clusters from among the olive woods, and rocks, and hills, upon the margin of the Sea.

The Boat which started for Nice that night, at eight o'clock, was very small, and so crowded with goods that there was scarcely room to move, neither was there anything to eat on board, except bread, nor to drink, except coffee But being due at Nice at about eight or so in the morning, this was of no consequence, so when we began to wink at the bright stars, in involuntary acknowledgment of their winking at us, we turned into our berths, in a crowded but cool little cabin, and slept soundly till morning

The Boat being as dull and dogged a little boat as ever was built, it was within an hour of noon when we turned into Nice Harbour, where we very little expected anything but breakfast. But we were laden with wool. Wool must not remain in the Custom-house at Marseilles more than twelve months at a stretch without paying duty. It is the custom to make fictitious removals of unsold wool to evade this law, to take it somewhere when the twelve months are nearly out, bring it straight back again, and warehouse it, as a new cargo, for nearly twelve months longer. This wool of ours

had come originally from some place in the East. It was recognized as Eastern produce the moment we entered the harbour. Accordingly, the gay little Sunday boats, full of holiday people, which had come off to greet us, were warned away by the authorities, we were declared in quarantine, and a great flag was solemnly run up to the mast-head on the wharf, to make it known to all the town

It was a very hot day indeed We were unshaved, unwashed, undressed, unfed, and could hardly enjoy the absurdity of lying blistering in a lazy harbour, with the town looking on from a respectable distance, all manner of whiskered men in cocked hats discussing our fate at a remote guard-house, with gestures (we looked very hard at them through telescopes) expressive of a week's detention at least—and nothing whatever the matter all the time But even in this crisis the brave Courier achieved a triumph He telegraphed somebody (I saw nobody) either naturally connected with the hotel, or put en rapport with the establishment for that occasion only The telegraph was answered, and in half an hour or less there came a loud Shout from the guard-house The captain was wanted Everybody helped the captain into his boat Everybody got his luggage, and said we were going The captain rowed away, and disappeared behind a little jutting corner of the Galley-slaves' Prison, and presently came back with something, very sulkily The brave Courier met him at the side, and received the something as its rightful owner was a wicker basket folded in a linen cloth, and in it were two great bottles of wine, a roast fowl, some salt fish chopped with garlic, a great loaf of bread, a dozen or so of peaches, and a few other trifles When we had selected our own breakfast, the brave Courier invited a chosen party to partake of these refreshments, and assured them that they need not be deterred by motives of delicacy, as he would order a second basket to be furnished at their expense Which he did—no one knew how—and by-and-by, the captain being again summoned, again sulkily returned with another something, over which my popular attendant presided as before, carving with a clasp-knife, his own personal property, something smaller than a Roman sword.

The whole party on board were made merry by these unexpected supplies, but none more so than a loquacious little Frenchman, who got drunk in five minutes, and a sturdy Cappuccini Friar, who had taken everybody's fancy mightily, and was one of the best friars in the world, I verily believe

He had a free, open countenance, and a rich brown, flowing beard, and was a remarkably handsome man, of about fifty He had come up to us, early in the morning, and inquired whether we were sure to be at Nice by eleven, saving that he particularly wanted to know, because if we reached it by that time he would have to perform Mass, and must deal with the consecrated wafer fasting, whereas, if there were no chance of his being in time, he would immediately breakfast. He made this communication, under the idea that the brave Courier was the captain, and indeed he looked much more like it than anybody else on board. Being assured that we should arrive in good time, he fasted, and talked, fasting, to everybody, with the most charming good-humour, answering jokes at the expense of friars with other jokes at the expense of laymen, and saying that friar as he was, he would engage to take up the two strongest men on board, one after the other, with his teeth, and carry them along the deck Nobody gave him the opportunity, but I dare say he could have done it, for he was a gallant, noble figure of a man, even in the Cappuccini dress, which is the ugliest and most ungainly that can well be

All this had given great delight to the loquacious Frenchman, who gradually patronized the Friar very much, and seemed to commiserate him as one who might have been born a Frenchman himself, but for an unfortunate destiny Although his patronage was such as a mouse might bestow upon a lion, he had a vast opinion of its condescension, and in the warmth of that sentiment, occasionally rose on tiptoe

to slap the Friar on the back

When the baskets arrived—it being then too late for Mass—the Friar went to work bravely, eating prodigiously of the cold meat and bread, drinking deep draughts of the wine, smoking cigars, taking snuff, sustaining an uninterrupted conversation with all hands, and occasionally running to the

boat's side and hailing somebody on snore with the intelligence that we must be got out of this quarantine somehow or other, as he had to take part in a great religious procession in the afternoon. After this, he would come back, laughing lustily from pure good-humour, while the Frenchman wrinkled his small face into ten thousand creases, and said how droll it was, and what a brave boy was that Friar! At length the heat of the sun without, and of the wine within, made the Frenchman sleepy. So, in the noontide of his patronage of his gigantic protegé, he lay down among the wool, and began to snore

It was four o'clock before we were released, and the Frenchman, dirty and woolly and snuffy, was still sleeping when the Friar went ashore. As soon as we were free, we all hurried away to wash and dress, that we might make a decent appearance at the procession, and I saw no more of the Frenchman until we took up our station in the main street to see it pass, when he squeezed himself into a front place, elaborately renovated, threw back his little coat, to show a broad-barred velvet waistcoat, sprinkled all over with stars, then adjusted himself and his cane so as utterly to bewilder and transfix the Friar, when he should appear

The procession was a very long one, and included an immense number of people divided into small parties, each party chanting nasally, on its own account, without reference to any other, and producing a most dismal result. There were angels, crosses, Virgins carried on flat boards surrounded by Cupids, crowns, saints, missals, infantry, tapers, monks, nuns, relics, dignitaries of the church in green hats walking under crimson parasols, and, here and there, a species of sacred street-lamp hoisted on a pole. We looked out anxiously for the Cappuccíni, and presently their brown robes and corded girdles were seen coming on, in a body. I observed the little Frenchman chuckle over the idea

I observed the little Frenchman chuckle over the idea that when the Friar saw him in the broad-barred waistcoat, he would mentally exclaim, "Is that my Patron? That distinguished man!" and would be covered with confusion. Ah! never was the Frenchman so deceived. As our friend the Cuppuccino advanced, with folded arms, he looked straight into the visage of the little Frenchman, with a bland.

serene, composed abstraction, not to be described. There was not the faintest trace of recognition or amusement on his features—not the smallest consciousness of bread and meat, wine, snuff, or cigars "C'est lui-même," I heard the little Frenchman say, in some doubt Oh, yes, it was himself It was not his brother or his nephew, very like him It was he He walked in great state—being one of the Superiors of the Order—and looked his part to admiration. There never was anything so perfect of its kind as the contemplative way in which he allowed his placid gaze to rest on us, his late companions, as it he had never seen us in his life, and didn't see us then. The Frenchman, quite humbled, took off his hat at last, but the Friar still passed on, with the same imperturbable serenity, and the broad barred waistcoat, fading into the crowd, was seen no more

The procession wound up with a discharge of musketry that shook all the windows in the town. Next afternoon

we started for Genoa, by the famed Cornice road

The half-French, half-Italian Vetturino, who undertook, with his little rattling carriage and pair, to convey us thither in three days, was a careless, good-looking fellow, whose light-heartedness and singing propensities knew no bounds as long as we went on smoothly So long, he had a word and a smile, and a flick of his whip, for all the peasant girls, and odds and ends of the Somnambula for all the echoes So long, he went jingling through every little village, with bells on his horses and rings in his ears-a very meteor of gallantry and cheerfulness But it was highly characteristic to see him under a slight reverse of circumstances, when, in one part of the journey, we came to a narrow place where a wagon had broken down and stopped up the road hands were twined in his hair immediately, as if a combination of all the direst accidents in life had suddenly fallen on his devoted head He swore in French, prayed in Italian, and went up and down, beating his feet on the ground in a very ecstasy of despair There were various carters and mule-drivers assembled round the broken wagon, and at last some man of an original turn of mind proposed that a general and joint effort should be made to get things to rights again, and clear the way-an idea which I verily

believe would never have presented itself to our friend, though we had remained there until now It was done at no great cost of labour, but at every pause in the doing his hands were wound in his hair again, as if there were no ray of hope to lighten his misery. The moment he was on his box once more, and clattering briskly down hill, he returned to the Somnambula and the peasant girls, as if it were not in the power of misfortune to depress him

Much of the romance of the beautiful towns and villages on this beautiful road disappears when they are entered, for many of them are very miserable The streets are narrow, dark, and dirty, the inhabitants lean and squalid, and the withered old women, with their wiry grey hair twisted up into a knot on the top of the head, like a pad to carry loads on, are so intensely ugly, both along the Riviera, and in Genoa, too, that, seen straggling about in dim doorways with their spindles, or crooning together in by-corners, they are like a population of Witches-except that they certainly are not to be suspected of brooms or any other instrument of cleanliness Neither are the pig skins, in common use to hold wine, and hung out in the sun in all directions, by any means ornamental, as they always preserve the form of very bloated pigs, with their heads and legs cut off, dangling upside-down by their own tails

These towns, as they are seen in the approach, howevernestling, with their clustering roofs and towers, among trees on steep hill-sides, or built upon the brink of noble baysare charming The vegetation is everywhere luxuriant and beautiful, and the palm-tree makes a novel feature in the novel scenery In one town, San Remo-a most extraordinary place, built on gloomy open arches, so that one might ramble underneath the whole town-there are pretty terrace gardens, in other towns, there is the clang of shipwrights' hammers, and the building of small vessels on the beach In some of the broad bays the fleets of Europe might ride at anchor In every case, each little group of houses presents, in the distance, some enchanting confusion of picturesque and fanciful shapes

The road itself—now high above the glittering sea, which breaks against the foot of the precipice, now turning inland

to sweep the shore of a bay, now crossing the stony bed of a mountain stream, now low down on the beach, now winding among riven rocks of many forms and colours, now chequered by a solitary ruined tower, one of a chain of towers built, in old time, to protect the coast from the invasions of the Barbary Corsairs—presents new beauties every moment. When its own striking scenery is past, and it trails on through a long line of suburb, lying or the flat sea-shore, to Genoa, then the changing glimpses of that noble city and its harbour awaken a new source of interest, freshened by every huge, unwieldy, half-inhabited old house in its outskirts, and coming to its climar when the city gate is reached, and all Genoa, with its beautiful harbour and neighbouring hills, bursts proudly on the view

TO PARMA, MODENA, AND BOLOGNA

I STROLLED away from Genoa on the 6th of November, bound for a good many places (England among them), but first for Piacenza, for which town I started in the coupé of a machine something like a travelling caravan, in company with the brave Courier, and a lady with a large dog, who howled dolefully, at intervals, all night. It was very wet, and very cold, very dark, and very dismal We travelled at the rate of barely four miles an hour, and stopped nowhere for refreshment At ten o'clock next morning we changed coaches at Alessandria, where we were packed up in another coach (the body whereof would have been small for a fly), in company with a very old priest, a young Jesuit, his companion—who carried their breviaries and other books, and who, in the exertion of getting into the coach, had made a gash of pink leg between his black stocking and his black knee-shorts, that reminded one of Hamlet in Ophelia's closet, only it was visible on both legs, a provincial Avvocato, and a gentleman with a red nose that had an uncommon and singular sheen upon it, which I never observed in the human subject before In this way we travelled on, until four o'clock in the afternoon, the roads being still very heavy, and the coach very slow To mend the matter, the old priest was troubled with cramps in his legs, so that he had to give a terrible yell every ten minutes or so, and be hoisted out by the united efforts of the company, the coach always stopping for him, with great gravity. This disorder, and the roads, formed the main subject of conversation. Finding in the afternoon that the coupe had discharged two people, and had only one passenger inside—a monstrous ugly Tuscan, with a great purple moustache, of which no man could see the ends when he had his hat on—I took advantage of its better accommodation, and in company with this gentleman (who was very conversational and good-humoured) travelled on, until nearly eleven o'clock at night, when the driver reported that he couldn't think of going any further, and we accordingly made a halt at a place called Stradella

The inn was a series of strange galleries surrounding a yard, where our coach, and a wagon or two, and a lot of fowls, and firewood, were all heaped up together, higgledypiggledy, so that you didn't know, and couldn't have taken your oath, which was a fowl and which was a cart. We followed a sleepy man with a flaring torch into a great, cold room, where there were two immensely broad beds, on what looked like two immensely broad deal dining-tables, another deal table of similar dimensions in the middle of the bare floor, four windows, and two chairs. Somebody said it was my room, and I walked up and down it, for half an hour or so, staring at the Tuscan, the old priest, the young priest, and the Avvocato (Red-Nose lived in the town, and had gone home), who sat upon their beds, and stared at me in return

The rather dreary whimsicality of this stage of the proceedings is interrupted by an announcement from the Brave (he has been cooking) that supper is ready, and to the priest's chamber (the next room, and the counterpart of mine) we all adjourn. The first dish is a cabbage, boiled with a great quantity of rice in a tureen full of water, and flavoured with cheese. It is so hot, and we are so cold, that it appears almost jolly. The second dish is some little bits of pork, fired with pigs' kidneys. The third, two red fowls. The fourth, two little red turkeys. The fifth, a huge stew of garlic and truffles, and I don't know what else, and this concludes the entertainment.

Before I can sit down in my own chamber, and think it of the dampest, the door opens, and the Brave comes moving in, in the middle of such a quantity of fuel that he looks like Birnam Wood taking a winter walk He kindles this heap in a twinkling, and produces a jorum of hot brandy-and-water, for that bottle of his keeps company with the seasons, and now holds nothing but the purest eau de vie When he has accomplished this feat, he retires for the night, and I hear him, for an hour afterwards, and indeed until I fall asleep. making jokes in some outhouse (apparently under the pillow), where he is smoking cigars with a party of confidential He never was in the house in his life before, but he knows everybody everywhere, before he has been anywhere five minutes, and is certain to have attracted to himself, in the meantime, the enthusiastic devotion of the whole establishment

This is at twelve o'clock at night. At four o clock next morning he is up again, fresher than a new-blown rose, making blazing fires without the least authority from the landlord, producing mugs of scalding coffee when nobody else can get anything but cold water, and going out into the dark streets and roaring for fresh milk, on the chance of somebody with a cow getting up to supply it. While the horses are "coming," I stumble out into the town too. It seems to be all one little Piazza, with a cold damp wind blowing in and out of the arches, alternately, in a sort of pattern. But it is profoundly dark, and raining heavily, and I shouldn't know it to-morrow, if I were taken there to try Which Heaven forbid

The horses arrive in about an hour In the interval, the driver swears—sometimes Christian oaths, sometimes Pagan oaths Sometimes, when it is a long, compound oath, he begins with Christianity and merges into Paganism Various messengers are dispatched—not so much after the horses, as after each other, for the first messenger never comes back, and all the rest imitate him At length the horses appear, surrounded by all the messengers, some kicking them, and some dragging them, and all shouting abuse to them Then the old priest, the young priest, the Avvocato, the Tuscan, and all of us, take our places; and sleepy voices proceeding

from the doors of extraordinary hutches in divers parts of the yard, cry out, "Addio cornere mio! Buon' viággio, cornere!"—salutations which the courier, with his face one monstrous grin, returns in like manner as we go jolting and

wallowing away through the mud.

At Piacenza, which was four or five hours' journey from the inn at Stradella, we broke up our little company before the hotel door, with divers manifestations of friendly feeling on all sides The old priest was taken with the cramp again before he had got half-way down the street, and the young priest laid the bundle of books on a doorstep, while he dutifully rubbed the old gentleman's legs The client of the Avvocato was waiting for him at the yard gate, and kissed him on each cheek with such a resounding smack, that I am afraid he had either a very bad case, or a scantily furnished purse The Tuscan, with a cigar in his mouth, went loitering off, carrying his hat in his hand that he might the better trail up the ends of his dishevelled moustache. And the brave Courier, as he and I strolled away to look about us, began immediately to entertain me with the private histories and

family affairs of the whole party

A brown, decayed old town Piacenza is-a deserted, solitary, grass-grown place, with ruined ramparts, half filled-up trenches, which afford a frowzy pasturage to the lean kine that wander about them, and streets of stern houses, moodily frowning at the other houses over the way sleepiest and shabbiest of soldiery go wandering about, with the double curse of laziness and poverty, uncouthly wrinkling their misfitting regimentals, the dirtiest of children play with their impromptu toys (pigs and mud) in the feeblest of gutters, and the gauntest of dogs trot in and out of the dullest of archways, in perpetual search of something to eat, which they never seem to find A mysterious and solemn Palace, guarded by two colossal statues, twin Genii of the place, stands gravely in the midst of the idle town, and the king with the marble legs, who flourished in the time of the Thousand and One Nights, might live contentedly inside of it, and never have the energy, in his upper half of flesh and blood, to want to come out.

What a strange, half-sorrowful and half-delicious doze it is

to ramble through these places gone to sleep and basking in the sun! Each, in its turn, appears to be, of all the mouldy, dreary, God-forgotten towns in the wide world, the chief Sitting on this hillock, where a bastion used to be, and where a noisy fortress was, in the time of the old Roman station here, I became aware that I have never known till now what it is to be lazy. A dormouse must surely be in very much the same condition before he retires under the wool in his cage, or a tortoise before he buries himself. I feel that I am getting rusty. That any attempt to think would be accompanied with a creaking noise. That there is nothing anywhere to be done, or needing to be done. That there is no more human progress, motion, effort, or advancement of any kind beyond this. That the whole scheme stopped here centuries ago, and lay down to rest until the Day of Judgment.

Never while the brave Couner lives! Behold him jingling out of Piacenza, and staggering this way, in the tallest posting-chaise ever seen, so that he looks out of the front window as if he were peeping over a garden wall, while the postilion, concentrated essence of all the shabbiness of Italy, pauses for a moment in his animated conversation, to touch his hat to a blunt-nosed little Virgin, hardly less shabby than himself, enshrined in a plaster Punch's show outside the town

In Genoa, and thereabouts, they train the vines on trelliswork supported on square clumsy pillars, which, in themselves, are anything but picturesque But here they twine them around trees, and let them trail among the hedges, and the vineyards are full of trees, regularly planted for this purpose, each with its own vine twining and clustering about it. Their leaves are now of the brightest gold and deepest red, and never was anything so enchantingly graceful and full of beauty Through miles of these delightful forms and colours the road winds its way The wild festoons, the ele gant wreaths, and crowns, and garlands of all shapes, the fairy nets flung over great trees, and making them prisoners in sport, the tumbled heaps and mounds of exquisite shapes upon the ground,-how rich and beautiful they are! And every now and then a long, long line of trees will be all bound and garlanded together, as if they had taken hold of one another and were coming dancing down the field!

Parma has cheerful, stirring streets for an Italian town, and consequently is not so characteristic as many places of less note, always excepting the retired Piazza, where the Cathedral, Baptistery, and Campanile—ancient buildings, of a sombre brown, embellished with innumerable grotesque monsters and dreamy-looking creatures carved in marble and red stone—are clustered in a noble and magnificent repose Their silent presence was only invaded, when I saw them, by the twittering of the many birds that were flying in and out of the crevices in the stones and little nooks in the architecture, where they had made their nests They were busy, rising from the cold shade of Temples made with hands, into the sunny air of heaven. Not so the worshippers within, who were listening to the same drowsy chant, or kneeling before the same kinds of images and tapers, or whispering, with their heads bowed down, in the selfsame dark confessionals, as I had left in Genoa and everywhere else

The decayed and mutilated paintings with which this church is covered have, to my thinking, a remarkably mournful and depressing influence. It is miserable to see great works of art-something of the Souls of Painters-perishing and fading away, like human forms This cathedral is odorous with the rotting of Correggio's frescoes in the Cupola Heaven knows how beautiful they may have been at one time Connoisseurs fall into raptures with them now, but such a laby-rinth of arms and legs, such heaps of foreshortened limbs, entangled and involved and jumbled together, no operative surgeon, gone mad, could imagine in his wildest delirium

There is a very interesting subterranean church here, the roof supported by marble pillars, behind each of which there seemed to be at least one beggar in ambush-to say nothing of the tombs and secluded altars From every one of these lurking-places such crowds of phantom-looking men and women, leading other men and women with twisted limbs, or chattering jaws, or paralytic gestures, or idiotic heads, or some other sad infirmity, came hobbling out to beg, that if the ruined frescoes in the cathedral above had been sud-denly animated, and had retired to this lower church, they could hardly have made a greater confusion, or exhibited a more confounding display of arms and legs

There is Petrarch's Monument, too, and there is the Baptistery, with its beautiful arches and immense font, and there is a gallery containing some very remarkable pictures, whereof a few were being copied by hairy-faced artists, with little velvet caps more off their heads than on. There is the Farnese Palace, too, and in it one of the dreanest spectacles of decay that ever was seen—a grand, old, gloomy theatre, mouldering away.

It is a large wooden structure, of the horse-shoe shape, the lower seats arranged upon the Roman plan, but above them great heavy chambers, rather than boxes, where the nobles sat remote, in their proud state Such desolation as has fallen on this theatre, enhanced in the spectator's fancy by its gay intention and design, none but worms can be familiar with A hundred and ten years have passed since any play was acted here The sky shines in through the gashes in the roof, the boxes are dropping down, wasting away, and only tenanted by rats, damp and mildew smear the faded colours, and make spectral maps upon the panels lean rags are dangling down where there were gay festoons on the proscenium, the stage has rotted so, that a narrow wooden gallery is thrown across it, or it would sink beneath the tread and bury the visitor in the gloomy depth beneath desolation and decay impress themselves on all the senses The air has a mouldering smell and an earthy taste, any stray outer sounds that straggle in with some lost sunbeam are muffled and heavy, and the worm, the maggot, and the rot have changed the surface of the wood beneath the touch, as time will seam and roughen a smooth hand If ever ghosts act plays, they act them on this ghostly stage

It was most delicious weather when we came into Modena, where the darkness of the sombre colonnades over the footways skirting the main street on either side was made refreshing and agreeable by the bright sky, so wonderfully blue I passed from all the glory of the day into a dim cathedral, where High Mass was performing, feeble tapers were burning, people were kneeling in all directions before all manner of shrines, and officiating priests were crooning the usual chant in the usual low, dull, drawling, melancholy tone

Thinking how strange it was to find in every stagnant town

this same Heart beating with the same monotonous pulsation, the centre of the same torpid, listless system, I came out by another door, and was suddenly scared to death by a blast from the shrillest trumpet that ever was blown Immediately came tearing round the corner an equestrian company from Paris-marshalling themselves under the walls of the church, and flouting, with their horses' heels, the griffins, lions, tigers, and other monsters in stone and marble decorating its exterior First, there came a stately nobleman with a great deal of hair, and no hat, bearing an enormous banner, on which was inscribed, MAZEPPA! TO-NIGHT! Then a Mexican chief, with a great pear-shaped club on his shoulder, like Hercules Then, six or eight Roman chariots, each with a beautiful lady in extremely short petticoats and unnaturally pink tights, erect within-shedding beaming looks upon the crowd, in which there was a latent expression of discomposure and anxiety, for which I couldn't account, until, as the open back of each chariot presented itself, I saw the immense difficulty with which the pink legs maintained their perpendicular over the uneven pavement of the town-which gave me quite a new idea of the ancient Romans and Britons The procession was brought to a close by some dozen indomitable warriors of different nations riding two and two, and haughtily surveying the tame population of Modena, among whom, however, they occasionally condescended to scatter largesse in the form of a few handbills After caracolling among the lions and tigers, and proclaiming that evening's entertainments with blast of trumpet, it then filed off by the other end of the square, and left a new and greatly increased dullness behind

When the procession had so entirely passed away that the shrill trumpet was mild in the distance, and the tail of the last horse was hopelessly round the corner, the people who had come out of the church to stare at it went back again But one old lady, kneeling on the pavement within, near the door, had seen it all, and had been immensely interested, without getting up, and this old lady's eye, at that juncture, I happened to catch—to our mutual confusion — She cut our embarrassment very short, however, by crossing herself de-

voutly, and going down at full length on her face before a figure in a fancy petticoat and a gilt crown, which was so like one of the procession-figures, that perhaps at this hour she may think the whole appearance a celestial vision Anyhow, I must certainly have forgiven her her interest in the Circus though I had been her Father Confessor

There was a little fiery-eyed old man with a crooked shoulder, in the cathedral, who took it very ill that I made no effort to see the bucket (kept in an old tower) which the people of Modena took away from the people of Bologna in the fourteenth century, and about which there was war made, and a mock-heroic poem by Tasso, too Being quite content, however, to look at the outside of the tower, and feast, in imagination, on the bucket within, and preferring to loiter in the shade of the tall Campanile, and about the cathedral, I have no personal knowledge of this bucket, even at the present time

Indeed, we were at Bologna before the little old man (or the Guide-Book) would have considered that we had half done justice to the wonders of Modena. But it is such a delight to me to leave new scenes behind, and still go on, encountering newer scenes—and, moreover, I have such a perverse disposition in respect of sights that are cut and dried and dictated—that I fear I sin against similar authorities in every place I visit

Be this as it may, in the pleasant Cemetery at Bologna I found myself walking next Sunday morning, among the stately marble tombs and colonnades, in company with a crowd of Peasants, and escorted by a little Cicerone of that town, who was excessively anxious for the honour of the place, and most solicitous to divert my attention from the bad monuments, whereas he was never tired of extolling the good ones. Seeing this little man (a good-humoured little man he was, who seemed to have nothing in his face but shining teeth and eyes) looking wistfully at a certain plot of grass, I asked him who was buried there. "The poor people, Signore," he said, with a shrug and a smile, and stopping to look back at mefor he always went on a little before, and took off his hat to introduce every new monument. "Only the poor, Signore' It's very cheerful. It's very lively. How green it is, how

cool! It's like a meadow! There are five "—holding up all the fingers of his right hand to express the number, which an Italian peasant will always do, if it be within the compass of his ten fingers—"there are five of my little children buried there, Signore—just there—a little to the right Well! Thanks to God! It's very cheerful How green it is, how cool it is! It's quite a meadow!"

He looked me very hard in the face, and seeing I was sorry for him, took a pinch of snuff (every Cicerone takes snuff), and made a little bow, partly in deprecation of his having alluded to such a subject, and partly in memory of the children and of his favourite saint. It was as unaffected and as perfectly natural a little bow as ever man mide. Immediately afterwards, he took his hat off altogether, and begged to introduce me to the next monument, and his eyes and his teeth shone brighter than before

THROUGH BOLOGNA AND FERRARA

There was such a very smart official in attendance at the Cemetery where the little Cicerone had buried his children, that when the little Cicerone suggested to me, in a whisper, that there would be no offence in presenting this officer, in return for some slight extra service, with a couple of pauls (about tenpence, English money), I looked incredulously at his cocked hat, wash-leather gloves, well-made uniform, and dazzling buttons, and rebuked the little Cicerone with a grave shake of the head For, in splendour of appearance, he was at least equal to the Deputy Usher of the Black Rod, and the idea of his carrying, as Jeremy Diddler would say, "such a thing as tenpence" away with him, seemed monstrous He took it in excellent part, however, when I made bold to give it him, and pulled off his cocked hat with a flourish that would have been a bargain at double the money

It seemed to be his duty to describe the monuments to the people—at all events he was doing so, and when I compared him, like Gulliver in Brobdingnag, "with the Institutions of my own beloved country, I could not refrain from tears of pride and exultation" He had no pace at all—no more than a tortoise He loitered as the people loitered, that they might gratify their curiosity, and positively allowed them, now and then, to read the inscriptions on the tombs. He was neither shabby nor insolent, nor churlish nor ignorant. He spoke his own language with perfect propriety, and seemed to consider himself, in his way, a kind of teacher of the people, and to entertain a just respect both for himself and them. They would no more have such a man for a Verger in Westminster Abbey than they would let the people in (as they do at Bologna) to see the monuments for nothing

Again, an ancient sombre town, under the brilliant sky, with heavy arcades over the footways of the older streets, and lighter and more cheerful archways in the newer portions of the town. Again, brown piles of sacred buildings, with more birds flying in and out of chinks in the stones, and more snarling monsters for the bases of the pillars Again, rich churches, drowsy Masses, curling incense, tinkling bells, priests in bright vestments, pictures, tapers, laced

altar cloths, crosses, images, and artificial flowers

There is a grave and learned air about the city, and a pleasant gloom upon it, that would leave it a distinct and separate impression in the mind among a crowd of cities, though it were not still further marked in the traveller's remembrance by the two brick leaning towers (sufficiently unsightly in themselves, it must be acknowledged), inclining crosswise as if they were bowing stiffly to each other-a most extraordinary termination to the perspective of some of the narrow streets The colleges, and churches too, and palaces-and above all, the academy of Fine Arts, where there are a host of interesting pictures, especially by Guido, DOMENICHINO, and LUDOVICO CARACCI—give it a place of its own in the memory Even though these were not, and there were nothing else to remember it by, the great Meridian on the pavement of the church of San Petronio, where the sunbeams mark the time among the kneeling people, would give it a fanciful and pleasant interest

Bologna being very full of tourists, detained there by an inundation which rendered the road to Florence impassable, I was quartered up at the top of an hotel, in an out-of-the-way room, which I never could find, containing a bed big

enough for a boarding-school, which I couldn't fall asleep in The chief among the waiters who visited this lonely retreat, where there was no other company but the swallows in the broad eaves over the window, was a man of one idea in connection with the English, and the subject of this harmless monomania was Lord Byron I made the discovery by accidentally remarking to him, at breakfast, that the matting with which the floor was covered was very comfortable at that season, when he immediately replied that Milor Beeron had been much attached to that kind of matting Observing, at the same moment, that I took no milk, he exclaimed with enthusiasm that Milor Beeron had never touched it At first I took it for granted, in my innocence, that he had been one of the Beeron servants, but no, he said, no, he was in the habit of speaking about my Lord to English gentlemen—that was all He knew all about him, he said In proof of it, he connected him with every possible topic, from the Monte Pulciano wine at dinner, which was grown on an estate he had owned, to the big bed itself, which was the very model of his When I left the inn, he coupled with his final bow in the yard a parting assurance that the road by which I was going had been Milor Beeron's favourite ride, and before the horse's feet had well begun to clatter on the pavement, he ran briskly upstairs again, I dare say to tell some other Englishman, in some other solitary room, that the guest who had just departed was Lord Beeron's living image

I had entered Bologna by night—almost midnight—and all along the road thither, after our entrance into the Papal territory (which is not, in any part, supremely well governed, Saint Peter's keys being rather rusty now), the driver had so worned about the danger of robbers in travelling after dark, and had so infected the brave Courier, and the two had been so constantly stopping and getting up and down to look after a portmanteau which was tied on behind, that I should have felt almost obliged to any one who would have had the goodness to take it away. Hence it was stipulated that, whenever we left Bologna, we should start so as not to arrive at Ferrara later than eight at night, and a delightful afternoon and evening journey it was, albeit through a flat district which

gradually became more marshy from the overflow of brooks and rivers in the recent heavy rains

At sunset, when I was walking on alone, while the horses rested, I arrived upon a little scene, which, by one of those singular mental operations of which we are all conscious, seemed perfectly familiar to me, and which I see distinctly now There was not much in it In the blood-red light there was a mournful sheet of water, just stirred by the evening wind, upon its margin a few trees. In the foreground was a group of silent peasant girls leaning over the parapet of a little bridge, and looking, now up at the sky, now down into the water, in the distance, a deep bell, the shade of approaching night on everything If I had been murdered there, in some former life, I could not have seemed to remember the place more thoroughly, or with a more emphatic chilling of the blood and the real remembrance of it acquired in that minute is so strengthened by the imaginary recollection, that I hardly think I could forget it

More solitary, more depopulated, more deserted, old Ferrara, than any city of the solemn brotherhood! The grass so grows up in the silent streets that any one might make hay there, literally, while the sun shines But the sun shines with diminished cheerfulness in grim Ferrara, and the people are so few who pass and re-pass through the public places, that the flesh of its inhabitants might be grass indeed, and

growing in the squares

I wonder why the head coppersmith in an Italian town always lives next door to the Hotel, or opposite, making the visitor feel as if the beating hammers were his own heart palpitating with a deadly energy! I wonder why jealous corndors surround the bedroom on all sides, and fill it with unnecessary doors that can't be shut, and will not open, and abut on pitchy darkness! I wonder why it is not enough that these distrustful genii stand agape at one's dreams all night, but there must also be round open portholes, high in the wall, suggestive, when a mouse or rat is heard behind the wainscot, of a somebody scraping the wall with his toes in his endeavours to reach one of these portholes and look in! I wonder why the fagots are so constructed as to know of no effect but an agony of heat when they are lighted and

replenished, and an agony of cold and suffocation at all other times! I wonder, above all, why it is the great feature of domestic architecture in Italian inns that all the fire goes up the chimney, except the smoke!

the chimney, except the smoke!

The answer matters little. Coppersmiths, doors, portholes, smoke, and fagots, are welcome to me Give me the smiling face of the attendant, man or woman, the counteous manner, the amnable desire to please and to be pleased, the lighthearted, pleasant, simple air—so many jewels set in dirt—and I am theirs again to-morrow!

ARIOSTO'S house, Tasso's prison, a rare old Gothic cathedral, and more churches of course, are the sights of Ferrara But the long silent streets, and the dismantled palaces, where ivy waves in lieu of banners, and where rank weeds are slowly creeping up the long-untrodden stairs, are the best sights of all

The aspect of this dreary town, half an hour before sunnise, one fine morning when I left it, was as picturesque as it seemed unreal and spectral. It was no matter that the people were not yet out of bed, for if they had all been up and busy, they would have made but little difference in that desert of a place It was best to see it without a single figure in the picture—a city of the dead, without one solitary survivor Pestilence might have ravaged streets, squares, and market places, and sack and siege have ruined the old houses, battered down their doors and windows, and made breaches in their roofs In one part, a great tower rose into the air. the only landmark in the melancholy view. In another, a prodigious castle, with a moat about it, stood aloof-a sullen city in itself In the black dungeons of this castle Parisina and her lover were beheaded in the dead of night The red light, beginning to shine when I looked back upon it, stained its walls without, as they have, many a time, been stained within in old days But for any sign of life they gave, the castle and the city might have been avoided by all human creatures from the moment when the axe went down upon the last of the two lovers, and might have never vibrated to another sound

[&]quot;Beyond the blow that to the block
Pierced through with forced and sullen shock."

Coming to the Po, which was greatly swollen and running fiercely, we crossed it by a floating bridge of boats, and so came into the Austrian territory, and resumed our journey through a country of which, for some miles, a great part was under water. The brave Courier and the soldiery had first quarrelled for half an hour or more over our eternal passport. But this was a daily relaxation with the Brave, who was always stricken deaf when shabby functionaries in uniform came, as they constantly did come, plunging out of wooden boxes to look at it—or, in other words, to beg—and who, stone deaf to my entreaties that the man might have a trifle given him, and we resume our journey in peace, was wont to sit reviling the functionary in broker. English, while the unfortunate man's face was a portrait of mental agony framed in the coach window, from his perfect ignorance of what was

being said to his disparagement

There was a postilion, in the course of this day's journey, as wild and savagely good-looking a vagabond as you would desire to see He was a tall, stout-made, dark-complexioned fellow, with a profusion of shaggy black hair hanging all over his face, and great black whiskers stretching down his throat His dress was a torn suit of rifle green, garnished here and there with red, a steeple-crowned hat, innocent of nap, with a broken and bedraggled feather stuck in the band, and a laming red neckerchief hanging on his shoulders He was not in the saddle, but reposed, quite at his ease, on a sort of low footboard in front of the postchaise, down amongst the horses' tails-convenient for having his brains kicked out at any moment To this Brigand the brave Courier, when we were at a reasonable trot, happened to suggest the practicability of going faster He received the proposal with a perfect yell of derision, brandished his whip about his head (such a whip to it was more like a home-made bow), flung up his heels, much higher than the horses, and disappeared in a paroxysm somewhere in the neighbourhood of the axletree I fully expected to see him lying in the road a hundred yards behind, but up came the steeple-crowned hat again, next minute, and he was seen reposing, as on a sofa, entertaining himself with the idea, and crying, "Ha, ha! what next? Oh the devil Faster too! Shoo-hoo-o-o!" (This last ejaculation, an inexpressibly defiant hoot) Being anxious to reach our immediate destination that night, I ventured by and-by to repeat the experiment on my own account. It produced exactly the same effect. Round flew the whip with the same scornful flourish, up came the heels, down went the steeple-crowned hat, and presently he reappeared, reposing as before, and saying to himself, "Ha, ha! what next? Faster too Oh the devil! Shoo—hoo—o—o!"

AN ITALIAN DREAM

I had been travelling for some days, resting very little in the might, and never in the day. The rapid and unbroken succession of novelties that had passed before me came back like half-formed dreams, and a crowd of objects wandered in the greatest confusion through my mind as I travelled on by a solitary road. At intervals some one among them would stop, as it were, in its restless flitting to and fro, and enable me to look at it quite steadily, and behold it in full distinctness. After a few moments it would dissolve, like a view in a magic-lantern, and while I saw some part of it quite plainly, and some faintly, and some not at all, would show me another of the many places. I had lately seen, lingering behind it, and coming through it. This was no sooner visible than, in its turn, it melted into something else.

At one moment I was standing again before the brown old rugged churches of Modena. As I recognized the curious pillars with grim monsters for their bases, I seemed to see them standing by themselves in the quiet square at Padua, where there were the staid old University, and the figures, demurely gowned, grouped here and there in the open space about it. Then I was strolling in the outskirts of that pleasant city, admiring the unusual neatness of the dwelling houses, gardens, and orchards, as I had seen them a few hours before. In their stead arose, immediately, the two towers of Bologna, and the most obstinate of all these objects failed to hold its ground a minute before the monstrous mosted castle of Ferrara, which, like an illustration to

a wild romance, came back again in the red sunrise, lording it over the solitary, grass-grown, withered town. In short, I had that incoherent but delightful jumble in my brain which travellers are apt to have, and are indolently willing to encourage. Every shake of the coach, in which I sat half-dozing in the dark, appeared to jerk some new recollection out of its place, and to jerk some other new recollection into it, and in this state I fell asleep

I was awakened after some time (as I thought) by the stopping of the coach—It was now quite night, and we were at the water-side—There lay here a black boat, with a little house or cabin in it of the same mournful coloui—When I had taken my seat in this, the boat was paddled by two men

towards a great light lying in the distance on the sea

Ever and again there was a dismal sigh of wind. It ruffled the water and rocked the boat, and sent the dark clouds flying before the stars. I could not but think how strange it was to be floating away at that hour, leaving the land behind, and going on towards this light upon the sea. It soon began to burn brighter and from being one light, became a cluster of tapers, twinkling and shining out of the water, as the boat approached towards them by a dreamy kind of track marked out upon the sea by posts and piles

We had floated on five miles or so over the dark water, when I heard it rippling, in my dream, against some obstruction near at hand. Looking out attentively, I saw through the gloom a something black and massive—like a shore, but lying close and flat upon the water, like a raft—which we were gliding past. The chief of the two rowers said it was a

burial-place

Full of the interest and wonder which a cemetery lying out there in the lonely sea inspired, I turned to gaze upon it as it should recede in our path, when it was quickly shut out from my view Before I knew by what or how, I found that we were gliding up a street—a phantom street—the houses rising on both sides from the water, and the black boat gliding on beneath their windows Lights were shining from some of these casements, plumbing the depth of the black stream with their reflected rays, but all was profoundly silent.

So we advanced into this ghostly city, continuing to hold our course through narrow streets and lanes, all filled and flowing with water Some of the corners where our way branched off were so acute and narrow that it seemed impossible for the long slender boat to turn them, but the rowers, with a low melodious cry of warning, sent it skimming on without a pause Sometimes the rowers of another black boat like our own echoed the cry, and slackening their speed (as I thought we did ours) would come flitting past us like a dark shadow Other boats of the same sombre hue were lying moored, I thought, to painted pillars, near to dark mysterious doors that opened straight upon the water Some of these were empty, in some, the rowers lay asleep, towards one I saw some figures coming down a gloomy archway from the interior of a palace, gaily dressed, and attended by torchbearers. It was but a glimpse I had of them, for a bridge, so low and close upon the boat that it seemed ready to fall down and crush us-one of the many bridges that perplexed the dream—blotted them out instantly On we went, floating towards the heart of this strange place—with water all about us where never water was elsewhere—clusters of houses. churches, heaps of stately buildings growing out of it-and everywhere the same extraordinary silence Presently we shot across a broad and open stream, and passing, as I thought, before a spacious paved quay, where the bright lamps with which it was illuminated showed long rows of arches and pillars of ponderous construction and great strength, but as light to the eye as garlands of hoar-frost or gossamer—and where, for the first time, I saw people walking -arrived at a flight of steps leading from the water to a large mansion, where, having passed through corridors and galleries innumerable, I lay down to rest, listening to the black boats stealing up and down below the window on the rippling water till I fell asleep

The glory of the day that broke upon me in this Dream—
its freshness, motion, buoyancy, its sparkles of the sun in
water, its clear blue sky and rustling air—no waking words
can tell But from my window I looked down on boats
and barks, on masts, sails, cordage, flags, on groups of
busy sailors working at the cargoes of these vessels, on wide

quays strewn with bales, casks, merchandise of many kinds; on great ships lying near at hand in stately indolence, on islands crowned with gorgeous domes and turrets, and where golden crosses glittered in the light, atop of wondrous churches springing from the sea! Going down upon the margin of the green sea, rolling on before the door, and filling all the streets, I came upon a place of such surpassing beauty and such grandeur, that all the rest was poor and faded in comparison with its absorbing loveliness

It was a great Piazza, as I thought, anchored, like all the rest, in the deep ocean On its broad bosom was a Palace, more majestic and magnificent in its old age than all the buildings of the earth in the high prime and fullness of their youth Cloisters and galleries—so light, they might have been the work of fairy hands, so strong that centuries had battered them in vain-wound round and round this palace, and enfolded it with a Cathedral gorgeous in the wild luxuriant fancies of the East At no great distance from its porch a lofty tower, standing by itself and rearing its proud head alone into the sky, looked out upon the Adriatic Sea Near to the margin of the stream were two ill-omened pillars of red granite, one having on its top a figure with a sword and shield, the other, a winged lion. Not far from these again, a second tower-richest of the rich in all its decorations, even here, where all was rich-sustained aloft a great orb, gleaming with gold and deepest blue, the Twelve Signs painted on it, and a mimic sun revolving in its course around them, while above, two bronze grants hammered out the hours upon a sounding bell An oblong square of lofty houses of the whitest stone, surrounded by a light and beautiful arcade, formed part of this enchanted scene, and here and there gay masts for flags rose tapering from the pavement of the unsubstantial ground

I thought I entered the Cathedral, and went in and out among its many arches, traversing its whole extent. A grand and dreamy structure, of immense proportions, golden with old mosaics, redolent of perfumes, dim with the smoke of incense, costly in treasure of precious stones and metals, glittering through iron bars, holy with the bodies of deceased saints, rainbow-hued with windows of stained glass, dark

with carved woods and coloured marbles, obscure in its vast heights and lengthened distances, shining with silver lamps and winking lights, unreal, fantastic, solemn, inconceivable throughout. I, thought I entered the old palace, pacing silent galleries and council-chambers, where the old rulers of this mistress of the waters looked sternly out, in pictures, from the walls, and where her high-prowed galleys, still victorious on canvas, fought and conquered as of old. I thought I wandered through its halls of state and triumph—bare and empty now —and musing on its pride and might, extinct (for that was past—all past), heard a voice say, "Some tokens of its ancient rule, and some consoling reasons for its downfall, may be traced here yet!"

I dreamed that I was led on then into some jealous rooms communicating with a prison near the palace, separated from it by a lofty bridge crossing a narrow street, and called, I

dreamed, the Bridge of Sighs

But first I passed two jagged slits in a stone wall, the lions' mouths—now toothless—where, in the distempered horror of my sleep, I thought denunciations of innocent men to the old wicked Council had been dropped through many a time when the night was dark. So when I saw the council-room to which such prisoners were taken for examination, and the door by which they passed out when they were condemned—a door that never closed upon a man with life and hope before him—my heart appeared to die within me

It was smitten harder though when, torch in hand, I descended from the cheerful day into two ranges, one below another, of dismal, awful, horrible stone cells. They were quite dark. Each had a loophole in its massive wall, where, in the old time, every day, a torch was placed—I dreamed—to light the prisoner within for half an hour. The captives, by the glimmering of these brief rays, had scratched and cut inscriptions in the blackened vaults. I saw them, for their labour with a rusty nail's point had outlived their agony and them, through many generations.

One cell I saw in which no man remained for more than four-and-twenty hours, being marked for dead before he entered it. Hard by, another, and a dismal one, whereto at midnight the confessor came—a monk, brown-robed and

hooded-ghastly in the day and free bright air, but in the midnight of that murky prison Hope's extinguisher and Murder's herald I had my foot upon the spot where, at the same dread hour, the shriven prisoner was strangled, and struck my hand upon the guilty door-low browed and stealthy-through which the lumpish sack was carried out into a boat, and rowed away and drowned where it was death to cast a net Sasswate Prison Saneua

Around this dungeon stronghold, and above some part of it-licking the rough walls without, and smearing them with damp and slime within, stuffing dank weeds and refuse into chinks and crevices, as if the very stones and bars had mouths to stop, furnishing a smooth road for the removal of the bodies of the secret victims of the State a road so ready that it went along with them, and ran before them like a cruel officer-flowed the same water that filled this dream

of mine and made it seem one, even at the time

Descending from the palace by a staircase called, I thought, the Giant's-I had some imaginary recollection of an old man abdicating, coming more slowly and more feebly down it when he heard the bell proclaiming his successor-I glided off in one of the dark boats until we came to an old arsenal guarded by four marble hons To make my dream more monstrous and unlikely, one of these had words and sentences upon its body, inscribed there at an unknown time and in an unknown language, so that their purport was

a mystery to all men

There was little sound of hammers in this place for building ships, and little work in progress, for the greatness of the city was no more, as I have said Indeed, it seemed a very wreck found drifting on the sea, a strange flag hoisted in its honourable stations, and strangers standing at its helm A splendid barge in which its ancient chief had gone forth pompously, at certain periods, to wed the ocean, lay here, I thought, no more, but, in its place, there was a tiny model, made from recollection, like the city's greatness, and it told of what had been (so are the strong and weak confounded in the dust) almost as eloquently as the massive pillars, arches, roofs, reared to overshadow stately ships that had no other shadow now upon the water or the earth.

An armoury was there yet—plundered and despoiled, but an armoury—with a fierce standard, taken from the Turks, drooping in the dull air of its cage. Rich suits of mail worn by great warriors were hoarded there, crossbows and bolts, quivers full of arrows, spears, swords, daggers, maces, shields, and heavy-headed axes. Plates of wrought steel and iron, to make the gallant horse a monster cased in metal scales, and one spring-weapon (easy to be carried in the breast), designed to do its office noiselessly, and made for shooting men with poisoned darts.

One press or case I saw full of accursed instruments of torture—horribly contrived to cramp, and pinch, and grind and crush men's bones, and tear and twist them with the torment of a thousand deaths. Before it were two iron helmets, with breast pieces, made to close up tight and smooth upon the heads of living sufferers, and fastened on to each was a small knob or anvil, where the directing devil could repose his elbow at his ease, and listen, near the walled-up ear, to the lamentations and confessions of the wretch within. There was that grim resemblance in them to the human shape—they were such moulds of sweating faces, pained and cramped—that it was difficult to think them empty, and terrible distortions lingering within them seemed to follow me when, taking to my boat again, I rowed off to a kind of garden or public walk in the sea, where there were grass and trees. But I forgot them when I stood upon its farthest brink—I stood there, in my dream—and looked, along the ripple, to the setting sun before me, in the sky and on the deep, a crimson flush, and behind me the whole city resolving into streaks of red and purple, on the water.

In the luxurious wonder of so rare a dream, I took but little heed of time, and had but little understanding of its flight. But there were days and nights in it, and when the sun was high, and when the rays of lamps were crooked in the running water, I was still affoat, I thought—plashing the slippery walls and houses with the cle

decayed apartments where the furniture, half awful, half grotesque, was mouldering away Pictures were there, replete with such enduring beauty and expression—with such passion, truth, and power—that they seemed so many young and fresh realities among a host of spectres. I thought these often intermingled with the old days of the city—with its beauties, tyrants, captains, patriots, merchants, courtiers, priests—nay, with its very stones, and bricks, and public places, all of which lived again, about me, on the walls. Then, coming down some marble staircase where the water lapped and oozed against the lower steps, I passed into my boat again, and went on in my dream

Floating down narrow lanes, where carpenters, at work with plane and chisel in their shops, tossed the light shaving straight upon the water, where it lay like weed, or ebbed away before me in a tangled heap Past open doors, decayed and rotten from long steeping in the vet, through which some scanty patch of vine shone green and bright, making unusual shadows on the pavement with its trembling Past quays and terraces, where women, gracefully veiled, were passing and repassing, and where idlers were reclining in the sunshine on flag-stones and on flights of steps Past bridges, where there were idlers too, loitering and looking over Below stone balconies, erected at a giddy height, before the loftiest windows of the loftiest houses Past plots of garden, theatres, shrines, prodigious piles of architecture—Gothic—Saracenic—fanciful with all the fancies of all times and countries Past buildings that were high, and low, and black, and white, and straight, and crooked, mean and grand, crazy and strong Twining among a tangled lot of boats and barges, and shooting out at last into a Grand Canal! There, in the errant fancy of my dream, I saw old Shylock passing to and fro upon a bridge, all built upon with shops and humming with the tongues of men A form I seemed to know for Desdemona's, leaned down through a latticed blind to pluck a flower And, in the dream, I thought that Shakespeare's spirit was abroad upon the water somewhere, stealing through the city

At night, when two votive lamps burnt before an image of the Virgin, in a gallery outside the great cathedral, near the roof, I fancied that the great Piazza of the Winged Lion was a blaze of cheerful light, and that its whole arcade was thronged with people, while crowds were diverting themselves in splendid coffee-houses opening from it—which were never shut, I thought, but open all night long When the bronze giants struck the hour of midnight on the bell, I thought the life and animation of the city were all centred here, and as I rowed away, abreast the silent quays, I only saw them dotted, here and there, with sleeping boatmen wrapped up in their cloaks, and lying at full length upon the stones

But close about the quays and churches, palaces and prisons-sucking at their walls, and welling up into the secret places of the town-crept the water always Noiseless and watchful-coiled round and round it, in its many folds, like an old serpent-waiting for the time, I thought, when people should look down into its depths for any stone of the old city that had claimed to be its mistress

Thus it floated me away, until I awoke in the old marketplace at Verona I have, many and many a time, thought since of this strange Dream upon the water, half-wondering if it lie there yet, and if its name be VENICE

BY VERONA, MANTUA, AND MILAN, ACROSS THE PASS OF THE SIMPLON, INTO SWIT-ZERLAND

I HAD been half afraid to go to Verona, lest it should at all put me out of conceit with Romeo and Juliet But I was no sooner come into the old market-place than the misgiving It is so fanciful, quaint, and picturesque a place, formed by such an extraordinary and rich variety of fantastic buildings, that there could be nothing better at the core of even this romantic town-scene of one of the most romantic and beautiful of stories

It was natural enough to go straight from the Marketplace to the House of the Capulets, now degenerated into a most miserable little inn Noisy vetturini and muddy market-carts were disputing possession of the yard, which was ankle-deep in dirt, with a brood of splashed and bespattered geese, and there was a grim-visaged dog, viciously panting in a doorway, who would certainly have had Romeo by the leg the moment he put it over the wall, if he had existed and been at large in those times. The orchard fell into other hands, and was parted off many years ago, but there used to be one attached to the house—or at all events there may have been-and the hat (Cappêllo), the ancient cognizance of the family, may still be seen, carved in stone, over the gateway of the yard The geese, the market-carts, their drivers, and the dog, were somewhat in the way of the story, it must be confessed, and it would have been pleasanter to have found the house empty, and to have been able to walk through the disused rooms. But the hat was unspeakably comfortable, and the place where the garden used to be, hardly less so Besides, the house is a distrustful, jealous-looking house as one would desire to see, though of a very moderate size So I was quite satisfied with it, as the veritable mansion of old Capulet, and was correspondingly grateful in my acknowledgments to an extremely unsentimental middle-aged lady, the Padrona of the Hotel, who was lounging on the threshold looking at the geese, and who at least resembled the Capulets in the one particular of being very great indeed in the "Family" way

From Juliet's home to Juliet's tomb is a transition as natural to the visitor as to fair Juliet herself, or to the proudest Juliet that ever has taught the torches to burn bright in any time. So I went off, with a guide, to an old, old garden, once belonging to an old, old convent, I suppose, and being admitted, at a shattered gate, by a bright-eyed woman who was washing clothes, went down some walks where fresh plants and young flowers were prettily growing among fiagments of old wall and ivycovered mounds, and was shown a little tank, or watertrough, which the bright-eyed woman, drying her arms upon her kerchief, called "La tomba di Giulietta la sfortunata" With the best disposition in the world to believe, I could do no more than believe that the bright-eyed woman believed, so I gave her that much credit, and her customary fee in ready money. It was a pleasure, rather than a dis-

appointment, that Juliet's resting-place was forgotten. However consolatory it may have been to Yorick's Ghost to hear the feet upon the pavement overhead, and, twenty times a day, the repetition of his name, it is better for Juliet to lie out of the track of tourists, and to have no visitors but such as come to graves in spring-rain, and sweet air, and sunshine.

Pleasant Verona! With its beautiful old palaces, and charming country in the distance, seen from terrace walks, and stately, balustraded galleries. With its Roman gates, still spanning the fair street, and casting, on the sunlight of to-day, the shade of fifteen hundred years ago. With its marble-fitted churches, lofty towers, rich architecture, and quaint old quiet thoroughfares, where shouts of Montagues and Capulets once resounded,

"And made Verona's ancient citizens
Cast by their grave, beseeming ornaments,
To wield old partizans"

With its fast-rushing river, picturesque old bridge, great castle, waving cypresses, and prospect so delightful and so cheerful! Pleasant Verona!

In the midst of it, in the Piazza di Brá—a spirit of old time among the familiar realities of the passing hour—is the great Roman Amphitheatre, so well preserved, and carefully maintained, that every row of seats is there, unbroken. Over certain of the arches the old Roman numerals may yet be seen, and there are corridors, and staircases, and subterranean passages for beasts, and winding ways, above ground and below, as when the fierce thousands hurried in and out, intent upon the bloody shows of the arena. Nestling in some of the shadows and hollow places of the walls, now, are smiths with their forges, and a few small dealers of one kind or other, and there are green weeds, and leaves, and grass upon the parapet. But little else is greatly changed.

When I had traversed all about it, with great interest, and had gone up to the topmost round of seats, and turning from the lovely panorama closed in by the distant Alps, looked down into the building, it seemed to lie before me like the unside of a prodigious hat of plaited straw, with an enormously brim and a shallow crown, the plaits being repre-

sented by the four-and-forty rows of seats The comparison is a homely and fantastic one, in sober remembrance and on paper, but it was irresistibly suggested at the moment, nevertheless

An equestrian troop had been there, a short time before the same troop, I dare say, that appeared to the old lady in the church at Modena-and had scooped out a little ring at one end of the arena, where their performances had taken place, and where the marks of their horses' feet were still I could not but picture to myself a handful of spectators gathered together on one or two of the old stone seats, and a spangled Cavalier being gallant, or a Policinello funny, with the grim walls looking on Above all, I thought how strangely those Roman mutes would gaze upon the favourite comic scene of the travelling English, where a British nobleman (Lord John), with a very loose stomach, dressed in a blue-tailed coat down to his heels, bright yellow breeches, and a white hat, comes abroad, riding double on a rearing horse, with an English lady (Lady Betsy) in a straw bonnet and green veil, and a red spencer, and who always carnes a

gigantic reticule, and a put-up parasol

I walked through and through the town all the rest of the day, and could have walked there until now, I think one place there was a very pretty modern theatre, where they had just performed the opera (always popular in Verona) of Romeo and Tuliet In another there was a collection, under a colonnade, of Greek, Roman, and Etruscan remains, presided over by an ancient man who might have been an Etruscan relic himself, for he was not strong enough to open the iron gate, when he had unlocked it, and had neither voice enough to be audible when he described the curiosities, nor sight enough to see them-he was so very old In another place there was a gallery of pictures, so abominably bad that it was quite delightful to see them mouldering away But anywhere-in the churches, among the palaces, in the streets, on the bridge, or down beside the river-it was always pleasant Verona, and in my remembrance always will be

I read Romeo and Juliet in my own room at the inn that night-of course, no Englishman had ever read it there before—and set out for Mantua next day at sunrise, repeating to myself (in the coupé of an omnibus, and next to the conductor, who was reading the Mysteries of Paris),—

"There is no would without Verona's walls
But purgatory, torture, hell itself
Hence banished is banished from the world,
And world's exile is death——"

which reminded me that Romeo was only banished five-andtwenty miles after all, and rather disturbed my confidence in

his energy and boldness

Was the way to Mantua as beautiful in his time, I wonder? Did it wind through pasture land as green, bright with the same glancing streams, and dotted with fresh clumps, of graceful trees? Those purple mountains lay on the horizon, then, for certain, and the dresses of these peasant girls, who wear a great, knobbed, silver pin like an English "lifepreserver" through their hair behind, can hardly be much changed The hopeful feeling of so bright a morning, and so exquisite a sunrise, can have been no stranger, even to an exiled lover's breast, and Mantua itself must have broken on him in the prospect, with its towers, and walls, and water, pretty much as on a commonplace and matrimonial omni-He made the same sharp twists and turns, perhaps, over two rumbling drawbridges, passed through the like long, covered, wooden bridge, and leaving the marshy water behind, approached the rusty gate of stagnant Mantua

If ever a man were suited to his place of residence, and his place of residence to him, the lean Apothecary and Mantua came together in a perfect fitness of things. It may have been more stirring then, perhaps. If so, the Apothecary was a man in advance of his time, and knew what Mantua would be in eighteen hundred and forty-four. He fasted

much, and that assisted him in his foreknowledge.

I put up at the Hotel of the Golden Lion and

I put up at the Hotel of the Golden Lion, and was in my own room arranging plans with the brave Courier, when there came a modest little tap at the door, which opened on an outer gallery surrounding a courtyard, and an intensely shabby little man looked in, to inquire if the gentleman would have a Cicerone to show the town His face was so

very wistful and anxious, in the half-opened doorway, and there was so much poverty expressed in his faded suit and little pinched hat, and in the threadbare worsted glove with which he held it—not expressed the less because these were evidently his genteel clothes, hastily slipped on—that I would as soon have trodden on him as dismissed him I engaged him on the instant, and he stepped in directly

While I finished the discussion in which I was engaged, he stood beaming by himself in a corner, making a feint of brushing my hat with his arm. If his fee had been as many napoleons as it was francs, there could not have shot over the twilight of his shabbiness such a gleam of sun as lighted

up the whole man, now that he was hired

"Well!" said I, when I was ready, "shall we go out now?"

"If the gentleman pleases It is a beautiful day A little
fresh, but charming—altogether charming The gentleman
will allow me to open the door This is the Inn Yard The
courtyard of the Golden Lion! The gentleman will please

to mind his footing on the stairs"
We were now in the street

"This is the street of the Golden Lion This, the outside of the Golden Lion The interesting window up there, on the first Piano, where the pane of glass is broken, is the window of the gentleman's chamber!"

Having viewed all these remarkable objects, I inquired if

there were much to see in Mantua

"Well! Truly, no Not much! So, so," he said, shrugging his shoulders apologetically

"Many churches?"

"No Nearly all suppressed by the French"

"Monasteries or convents?"

"No The French again! Nearly all suppressed by Napoleon"

"Much business?"

"Very little business"

"Many strangers?"

"Ah Heaven "

I thought he would have fainted

"Then, when we have seen the two large churches yonder, what shall we do next?" said I

He looked up the street, and down the street, and rubbed his chin timidly, and then said, glancing in my face as if a light had broken on his mind, yet with a humble appeal to my forbearance that was perfectly irresistible,—

"We can take a little turn about the town, Signore!"

(Si può far 'un piccolo giro della citta)

It was impossible to be anything but delighted with the proposal, so we set off together in great good-humour. In the relief of his mind, he opened his heart, and gave up as much of Mantua as a Cicerone could

"One must eat," he said, "but, bah! it was a dull place,

without doubt!"

He made as much as possible of the Basilica of Santa Andrea—a noble church—and of an inclosed portion of the payement, about which tapers were burning, and a few people kneeling, and under which is said to be preserved the Sangreal of the old Romances This church disposed of, and another after it (the cathedral of San Pietro), we went to the Museum, which was shut up "It was all the same," he "Bah! there was not much inside!" Then we went to see the Piazza del Diavolo, built by the Devil (for no particular purpose) in a single night, then the Piazza Virgiliana, then the statue of Virgil-our Poet, my little friend said, plucking up a spirit for the moment, and putting his hat a little on one side. Then we went to a dismal sort of farmyard, by which a picture-gallery was approached The moment the gate of this retreat was opened, some five hundred geese came waddling round us, stretching out their necks, and clamouring in the most hideous manner, as if they were ejaculating, "Oh! here's somebody come to see the Pictures! Don't go up! don't go up!" While we went up, they waited very quietly about the door in a crowd. cackling to one another occasionally, in a subdued tone, but the instant we appeared again, their necks came out like telescopes, and setting up a great noise, which meant, I have no doubt, "What, you would go, would you? What do you think of it? How do you like it?" they attended us to the outer gate, and cast us forth, densively, into Mantua.

The geese who saved the Capitol were, as compared with these, Pork to the learned Pig. What a gallery it was! I

would take their opinion on a question of art, in preference

to the discourses of Sir Joshua Reynolds

Now that we were standing in the street, after being thus ignominously escorted thither, my little friend was plainly reduced to the "piccolo giro," or little circuit of the town, he had formerly proposed But my suggestion that we should visit the Palazzo Tè (of which I had heard a great deal, as a strange wild place) imparted new life to him, and away we went

The secret of the length of Midas's ears would have been more extensively known, if that servant of his, who whispered it to the reeds, had lived in Mantua, where there are reeds and rushes enough to have published it to all the world The Palazzo Tè stands in a swamp, among this sort of vegetation, and is, indeed, as singular a place as I ever saw

Not for its dreamness, though it is very dreary its dampness, though it is very damp. Nor for its desolate condition, though it is as desolate and neglected as house But chiefly for the unaccountable nightmares with which its interior has been decorated (among other subjects of more delicate execution) by Giulio Romano There is a leering Giant over a certain chimney-piece, and there are dozens of Giants (Titans warring with Tove) on the walls of another room, so inconceivably ugly and grotesque, that it is marvellous how any man can have imagined such creatures In the chamber in which they abound, these monsters, with swollen faces and cracked cheeks, and every kind of distortion of look and limb, are depicted as staggering under the weight of falling buildings, and being overwhelmed in the ruins; upheaving masses of rock, and burying themselves beneath; vainly striving to sustain the pillars of heavy roofs that topple down upon their heads, and, in a word, undergoing and doing every kind of mad and demoniacal destruction figures are immensely large, and exaggerated to the utmost pitch of uncouthness, the colouring is harsh and disagreeable, and the whole effect more like (I should imagine) a violent rush of blood to the head of the spectator, than any real picture set before him by the hand of an artist apoplectic performance was shown by a sickly looking woman, whose appearance was referable, I dare say, to the bad air of

the marshes, but it was difficult to help feeling as if she were too much haunted by the Giants, and they were frightening her to death, all alone in that exhausted cistern of a Palace, among the reeds and rushes, with the mists hovering about outside, and stalking round and round it continually

Our walk through Mantua showed us, in almost every street, some suppressed church—now used for a warehouse, now for nothing at all, all as crazy and dismantled as they could be, short of tumbling down bodily. The marshy town was so intensely dull and flat, that the dirt upon it seemed not to have come there in the ordinary course, but to have settled and mantled on its surface as on standing water. And yet there were some business dealings going on, and some profits realizing, for there were arcades full of Jews, where those extraordinary people were sitting outside their shops, contemplating their stores of stuffs, and woollens, and bright handkerchiefs, and trinkets, and looking, in all respects, as wary and business-like as their biethren in Houndsditch, London

Having selected a Vetturino from among the neighbouring Christians, who agreed to carry us to Milan in two days and a half, and to start, next morning, as soon as the gates were opened, I returned to the Golden Lion, and dined luxuriously in my own room, in a narrow passage between two bedsteads, confronted by a smoky fire, and backed up by a chest of drawers. At six o clock next morning, we were jingling in the dark through the wet cold mist that enshrouded the town, and, before noon, the driver (a native of Mantua, and sixty years of age or thereabouts) began to ask the way to Milan

It lay through Bozzolo, formerly a little republic, and now one of the most deserted and poverty-stricken of towns, where the landlord of the miserable inn (God bless him! it was his weekly custom) was distributing infinitesimal coins among a clamorous herd of women and children, whose rags were fluttering in the wind and rain outside his door, where they were gathered to receive his charity. It lay through mist, and mud, and rain, and vines trained low upon the ground, all that day and the next, the first sleeping-place being Cremona, memorable for its dark brick churches, and

mmensely high tower, the Torrazzo—to say nothing of its riolins, of which it certainly produces none in these degener ate days, and the second, Lodi Then we went on, through more mud, mist, and rain, and marshy ground, and through such a fog, as Englishmen, strong in the faith of their own grievances, are apt to believe is nowhere to be found but in their own country, until we entered the paved streets of Milan

The fog was so dense here that the spire of the far-famed Cathedral might as well have been at Bombay, for anything that could be seen of it at that time But as we halted to refresh for a few days then, and returned to Milan again next summer, I had ample opportunities of seeing the glorious

structure in all its majesty and beauty

All Christian homage to the saint who lies within it! There are many good and true saints in the Calendar, but San Carlo Borromeo has—if I may quote Mrs Primrose on such a subject—"my warm heart" A charitable doctor to the sick, a munificent friend to the poor—and this, not in any spirit of blind bigotry, but as the bold opponent of enormous abuses in the Romish Church—I honour his memory I honour it none the less, because he was nearly slain by a priest, suborned by priests to murder him at the altar—in acknowledgment of his endeavours to reform a false and hypocritical brotherhood of monks Heaven shield all imitators of San Carlo Borromeo as it shielded him! A reforming Pope would need a little shielding, even now

The subterranean chapel in which the body of San Carlo Borromeo is preserved presents as striking and as ghastly a contrast, perhaps, as any place can show. The tapers which are lighted down there flash and gleam on alti-relievi in gold and silver, delicately wrought by skilful hands, and representing the principal events in the life of the saint. Jewels and precious metals shine and sparkle on every side. A windlass slowly removes the front of the altar, and within it, in a gorgeous shrine of gold and silver, is seen, through alabaster, the shrivelled mummy of a man—the pontifical robes with which it is adorned radiant with diamonds, emeralds, rubies, every costly and magnificent gem. The shrunken heap of poor earth in the midst of this great glitter is more pitiful

than if it lay upon a dunghill There is not a ray of imprisoned light in all the flash and fire of jewels but seems to mock the dusty holes where eyes were once Every thread of silk in the rich vestments seems only a provision from the worms that spin, for the behoof of worms that propagate in sepulchres

In the old refectory of the dilapidated Convent of Santa Maria delle Grazie is the work of art, perhaps, better known than any other in the world—the Last Supper, by Leonardo da Vinci, with a door cut through it by the intelligent Dominician friars, to facilitate their operations at dinner-time

I am not mechanically acquainted with the art of painting. and have no other means of judging of a picture than as I see it resembling and refining upon nature, and presenting graceful combinations of forms and colours I am, therefore, no authority whatever, in reference to the "touch" of this or that master, though I know very well (as anybody may, who chooses to think about the matter) that few very great masters can possibly have painted, in the compass of their lives, one half of the pictures that bear their names, and that are recognized by many aspirants to a reputation for taste as undoubted originals But this by the way Of the Last Supper, I would simply observe, that in its beautiful composition and arrangement, there it is, at Milan, a wonderful picture, and that, in its original colouring, or in its original expression of any single face or feature, there it is not from the damage it has sustained from damp, decay, and neglect, it has been (as Barry shows) so retouched upon and repainted, and that so clumsily, that many of the heads are now positive deformities, with patches of paint and plaster sticking upon them like wens, and utterly distorting the expression Where the original artist set that impress of his genius on a face, which, almost in a line or touch, separated him from meaner painters and made him what he was, succeeding bunglers, filling up, or painting across seams and cracks, have been quite unable to imitate his hand, and putting in some scowls, or frowns, or wrinkles of their own, have blotched and spoiled the work This is so well established as an historical fact, that I should not repeat it, at the risk of being tedious, but for having observed an English

gentleman before the picture, who was at great pains to fall into what I may describe as mild convulsions at certain minute details of expression which are not left in it. Whereas, it would be comfortable and rational for travellers and critics to arrive at a general understanding that it cannot fail to have been a work of extraordinary merit once, when, with so few of its original beauties remaining, the grandeur of the general design is yet sufficient to sustain it as a piece replete with interest and dignity

We achieved the other sights of Milan in due course, and a fine city it is, though not so unmistakably Italian as to possess the characteristic qualities of many towns far less important in themselves The Corso, where the Milanese gentry ride up and down in carriages, and rather than not do which they would half starve themselves at home, is a most noble public promenade, shaded by long avenues of trees In the splendid theatre of La Scala there was a ballet of action performed after the opera, under the title of Prometheus, in the beginning of which some hundred or two of men and women represented our mortal race before the refinements of the arts and sciences, and loves and graces, came on earth to sotten them I never saw anything more effective Generally speaking, the pantomimic action of the Italians is more remarkable for its sudden and impetuous character than for its delicate expression, but in this case the drooping monotony, the weary, miserable, listless, moping life, the sordid passions and desires of human creatures destitute of those elevating influences to which we owe so much, and to whose promoters we render so little, were expressed in a manner really powerful and affecting I should have thought it almost impossible to present such an idea so strongly on the stage without the aid of speech

Milan soon lay behind us, at five o'clock in the morning, and before the golden statue on the summit of the cathedral spire was lost in the blue sky, the Alps, stupendously confused in lofty peaks and ridges, clouds and snow, were towering in our path

Still we continued to advance towards them until nightfall; and, all day long, the mountain tops presented strangely shifting shapes, as the road displayed them in different points

of view The beautiful day was just declining when we came upon the Lago Maggiore, with its lovely islands For however fanciful and fantastic the Isola Bella may be, and is, it still is beautiful Anything springing out of that blue water, with that scenery around it, must be

It was ten o'clock at night when we got to Domo d'Ossola, at the foot of the Pass of the Simplon But as the moon was shining brightly, and there was not a cloud in the starlit sky, it was no time for going to bed, or going anywhere but on So we got a little carriage after some delay, and began the ascent

It was late in November, and the snow lying four or five feet thick in the beaten road on the summit (in other parts the new drift was already deep), the air was piercing cold But the serenity of the night, and the grandeur of the road, with its impenetrable shadows and deep glooms, and its sudden turns into the shining of the moon, and its incessant roar of falling water, rendered the journey more and more sublime at every step

Soon leaving the calm Italian villages below us, sleeping in the moonlight, the road began to wind among dark trees, and after a time emerged upon a barer region, very steep and toilsome, where the moon shone bright and high By degrees the roar of water grew louder, and the stupendous track, after crossing the torrent by a bridge, struck in between two massive perpendicular walls of rock that quite shut out the moonlight, and only left a few stars shining in the narrow strip of sky above Then even this was lost in the thick darkness of a cavern in the rock, through which the way was pierced, the terrible cataract thundering and roaring close below it, and its foam and spray hanging in a mist about the entrance Emerging from this cave, and coming again into the moonlight, and across a dizzy bridge, it crept and twisted upward, through the Gorge of Gondo, savage and grand beyond description, with smooth-fronted precipices rising up on either hand, and almost meeting overhead. Thus we went, climbing on our rugged way, higher and higher all night, without a moment's weariness-lost in the contemplation of the black rocks, the tremendous heights and depths, the fields of smooth snow lying in the clefts and hollows, and the fierce torrents thundering headlong down the deep abyss.

Towards daybreak we came among the snow, where a keen wind was blowing fiercely. Having, with some trouble, awakened the inmates of a wooden house in this solitude, round which the wind was howling dismally, catching up the snow in wreaths and hurling it away, we got some breakfast in a room built of rough timbers, but well warmed by a stove, and well contrived (as it had need to be) for keeping out the bitter storms. A sledge being then made ready, and four horses harnessed to it, we went ploughing through the snow, st ll upward, but now in the cold light of morning, and with the great white desert on which we travelled plain and clear

We were well upon the summit of the mountain, and had before us the rude cross of wood denoting its greatest altitude above the sea, when the light of the rising sun struck all at once upon the waste of snow, and turned it a deep red The

lonely grandeur of the scene was then at its height

As we went sledging on, there came out of the Hospice founded by Napoleon a group of peasant travellers, with staves and knapsacks, who had rested there last night, attended by a monk or two their hospitable entertainers trudging slowly forward with them for company's sake It was pleasant to give them good-morning, and pretty, looking back a long way after them, to see them looking back at us, and hesitating presently, when one of our horses stumbled and fell, whether or no they should return and help us But he was soon up again, with the assistance of a rough wagoner whose team had stuck fast there too, and when we had helped him out of his difficulty in return, we left him slowly ploughing towards them, and went softly and swiftly forward, on the brink of a steep precipice, among the mountain pines

Taking to our wheels again, soon afterwards, we began rapidly to descend, passing under everlasting glaciers, by means of arched galleries hung with clusters of dripping icicles, under and over foaming waterfalls, near places of refuge, and galleries of shelter against sudden danger, through caverns over whose arched roofs the avalanches slide in spring, and bury themselves in the unknown gulf beneath Down, over lofty bridges, and through horrible ravines, a little shifting speck in the vast desolation of ice and snow and monstrous granite rocks, down through the deep Gorge of the

Saltine, and deafened by the torrent plunging madly down, among the riven blocks of rock, into the level country far below. Gradually down, by zigzag roads, lying between an upward and a downward precipice, into warmer weather, calmer air, and softer scenery, until there lay before us, glit tering like gold or silver in the thaw and sunshine, the metal-covered, red, green, yellow domes and church-spires of a Swiss town

of a Swiss town

The business of these recollections being with Italy, and my business, consequently, being to scamper back thither as fast as possible, I will not recall (though I am sorely tempted) how the Swiss villages, clustered at the feet of giant mountains, looked like playthings, or how confusedly the houses were heaped and piled together, or how there were very narrow streets, to shut the howling winds out in the winter time, and broken bridges, which the impetuous torrents, suddenly released in spring, had swept away Or how there were peasant women here, with great round fur caps, looking, when they peeped out of casements and only their heads were seen, like a population of Sword bearers to the Lord Mayor of London or now the town of Vevay, lying on the smooth lake of Geneva, was beautiful to see, or how the statue of Saint Peter in the street at Fribourg grasps the largest key that ever was beheld, or how Fribourg is illustrious for its two suspension bridges and its grand cathedral organ

Or how, between that town and Bâle, the road meandered

and its grand cathedral organ

Or how, between that town and Bâle, the road meandered among thriving villages of wooden cottages, with overhanging thatched roofs, and low protruding windows, glazed with small round panes of glass like crown-pieces, or how, in every little Swiss homestead, with its cart or wagon carefully stowed away beside the house, its little garden, stock of poultry, and groups of red-cheeked children, there was an air of comfort, very new and very pleasant after Italy, or how the dresses of the women changed again, and there were no more sword-bearers to be seen, and fair white stomachers, and great black, fan shaped, gauzy-looking caps prevailed instead

Or how the country by the Jura Mountains, sprinkled with snow, and lighted by the moon, and musical with falling water, was delightful, or how, below the windows of the great hotel of the Three Kings at Bâle, the swollen Rhine ran fast

and green; or how, at Strasbourg, it was quite as fast but not as green, and was said to be foggy lower down, and, at that late time of the year, was a far less certain means of progress than the highway road to Paris

Or how Strasbourg itself, in its magnificent old Gothic Cathedral, and its ancient houses with their peaked roofs and gables, made a little gallery of quaint and interesting views, or how a crowd was gathered inside the cathedral at noon to see the famous mechanical clock in motion, striking twelve How, when it struck twelve, a whole army of puppets went through many ingenious evolutions, and, among them, a huge puppet cock, perched on the top, crowed twelve times, loud and clear. Or how it was wonderful to see this cock at great pains to clap its wings and strain its throat, but obviously having no connection whatever with its own voice, which was deep within the clock, a long way down

Or how the road to Paris was one sea of mud, and thence to the coast, a little better for a hard frost Or how the cliffs of Dover were a pleasant sight, and England was so wonderfully neat—though dark, and lacking colour on a winter's

day, it must be conceded

Or how, a few days afterwards, it was cool recrossing the Channel, with ice upon the deck, and snow lying pretty deep in France Or how the Malle Poste scrambled through the snow headlong, drawn in the hilly parts by any number of stout horses at a canter, or how there were, outside the Post-office Yard in Paris, before daybreak, extraordinary adventurers in heaps of rags, groping in the snowy streets with little rakes, in search of odds and ends

Or how, between Paris and Marseilles, the snow being then exceeding deep, a thaw came on, and the mail waded rather than rolled for the next three hundred miles or so, breaking springs on Sunday nights, and putting out its two passengers to warm and refresh themselves, pending the repairs, in miserable billiard-rooms, where hairy company, collected about stoves, were playing cards, the cards being very like themselves—extremely limp and dirty

Or how there was detention at Marseilles from stress of weather, and steamers were advertised to go which did of go; or how the good Steam-packet Charlemagne at length.

put out, and met such weather that now she threatened to run into Toulon, and now into Nice, but, the wind moderating, did neither, but ran on into Genoa harbour instead, where the familiar bells rang sweetly in my ear. Or how there was a travelling party on board, of whom one member was very ill in the cabin next to mine, and, being ill, was cross, and therefore declined to give up the dictionary, which he kept under his pillow, thereby obliging his companions to come down to him constantly to ask what was the Italian for a lump of sugar—a glass of brandy-and-water—what's o'clock? and so forth, which he always insisted on looking out with his own sea-sick eyes, declining to entrust the book to any man alive

Like Grumio, I might have told you in detail all this and something more—but to as little purpose—were I not deterred by the remembrance that my business is with Italy There-

fore, like Grumio's story, "it shall die in oblivion."

TO ROME BY PISA AND SIENA

There is nothing in Italy more beautiful to me than the coast-road between Genoa and Spezzia. On one side—sometimes far below, sometimes nearly on a level with the road, and often skirted by broken rocks of many shapes—there is the free blue sea, with here and there a picturesque felucca gliding slowly on, on the other side are lofty hills, ravines besprinkled with white cottages, patches of dark olive woods, country churches with their light open towers, and country houses gaily painted. On every bank and knoll by the way-side the wild cactus and aloe flourish in exuberant profusion, and the gardens of the bright villages along the road are seen, all blushing in the summer-time with clusters of the belladonna, and are fragrant in the autumn and winter with golden oranges and lemons

shore There is one town, Camoglia with its little harbour on the sea, hundreds of feet below the road, where families of mariners live, who, time out of mind, have owned coastingvessels in that place, and have traded to Spain and elsewhere Seen from the road above, it is like a tiny model on the margin of the dimpled water, shining in the sun Descended into, by the winding mule-tracks, it is a perfect miniature of a primitive seafaring town—the saltest, roughest, most piratical little place that ever was seen Great rusty iron rings and mooring-chains, capstans, and fragments of old masts and spars, choke up the way Hardy rough-weather boats, and seamen's clothing flutter in the little harbour, or are drawn out on the sunny stones to dry On the parapet of the rude pier a few amphibious-looking fellows lie asleep, with their legs dangling over the wall, as though earth or water were all one to them, and if they slipped in, they would float away, dozing comfortably among the fishes The church is bright with trophies of the sea, and votive offerings, in commemoration of escape from storm and shipwreck dwellings not immediately abutting on the harbour are approached by blind low archways and by crooked steps, as if in darkness and in difficulty of access they should be like holds of ships, or inconvenient cabins under water, and everywhere there is a smell of fish, and sea-weed, and old rope

The coast-road whence Camoglia is descried so far below is famous, in the warm season, especially in some parts near Genoa, for fire-flies Walking there on a dark night, I have seen it made one sparkling firmament by these beautiful insects, so that the distant stars were pale against the flash and glitter that spangled every olive wood and hillside, and pervaded the whole air

It was not in such a season, however, that we traversed this road on our way to Rome The middle of January was only just past, and it was very gloomy and dark weather, very wet besides In crossing the fine pass of Bracco, we encountered such a storm of mist and rain that we travelled in a cloud the whole way There might have been no Mediterranean in the world for anything that we saw of it there, except when a sudden gust of wind, clearing the mist

before it for a moment, showed the agitated sea at a great depth below, lashing the distant rocks, and spouting up its foam furiously. The rain was incessant, every brook and torrent was greatly swollen, and such a deafening leaping, and roaring, and thundering of water I never heard the like of in my life.

Hence, when we came to Spezzia, we found that the Magra, an unbridged river on the highroad to Pisa, was too high to be safely crossed in the Ferry Boat, and were fain to wait until the afternoon of next day, when it had, in some degree, subsided Spezzia, however, is a good place to tarry at, by reason, firstly, of its beautiful bay, secondly, of its ghostly Inn, thirdly, of the head-dress of the women, who wear, on one side of their head, a small doll's straw hat, stuck on to the hair, which is certainly the oddest and most roguish head-gear that ever was invented

The Magra safely crossed in the Ferry Boat—the passage is not by any means agreeable when the current is swollen and strong—we arrived at Carrara within a few hours. In good time next morning we got some ponies, and went out

to see the marble quarries

They are four or five great glens, running up into a range of lofty hills, until they can run no longer, and are stopped by being abruptly strangled by Nature The quarries, "or caves," as they call them there, are so many openings, high up in the hills, on either side of these passes, where they blast and excavate for marble—which may turn out good or bad, may make a man's fortune very quickly, or ruin him by the great expense of working what is worth nothing Some of these caves were opened by the ancient Romans, and remain as they left them to this hour Many others are being worked at this moment, others are to be begun to-morrow, next week, next month, others are unbought, unthought of, and marble enough for more ages than have passed since the place was resorted to lies hidden everywhere, patiently awaiting its time of discovery

As you toil and clamber up one of these steep gorges (having left your pony soddening his girths in water, a mile or two lower down), you hear, every now and then, echoing among the hills, in a low tone, more silent than the previous

silence, a melancholy warning bugle—a signal to the miners to withdraw Then there is a thundering, and echoing from hill to hill, and perhaps a splashing up of great fragments of rock into the air, and on you toil again until some other bugle sounds, in a new direction, and you stop-directly, lest you should come within the range of the new explosion.

There were numbers of men working high up in these hills—on the sides—clearing away and sending down the broken masses of stone and earth, to make way for the blocks of marble that had been discovered. As these came

There were numbers of men working high up in these hills—on the sides—clearing away and sending down the broken masses of stone and earth, to make way for the blocks of marble that had been discovered. As these came rolling down from unseen hands into the narrow valley, I could not help thinking of the deep glen (just the same sort of glen) where the Roc left Sindbad the Sailor, and where the merchants from the heights above flung down great pieces of meat for the diamonds to stick to There were no eagles here, to darken the sun in their swoop, and pounce upon them, but it was as wild and fierce as if there had been hundreds.

But the road, the road down which the marble comes, how ever immense the blocks! The genius of the country and the spirit of its institutions pave that road—repair it, watch it, keep it going! Conceive a channel of water running over a rocky bed, beset with great heaps of stone of all shapes and sizes, winding down the middle of this valley, and that being the road—because it was the road five hundred years ago! Imagine the clumsy carts of five hundred years ago being used to this hour, and drawn, as they used to be five hundred years ago by oxen, whose ancestors were worn to death five hundred years ago, as their unhappy descendants are now in twelve months by the suffering and agony of this cruel work! Two pair, four pair, ten pair, twenty pair, to one block, according to its size, down it must come, this way. In their struggling from stone to stone, with their enormous loads behind them, they die frequently upon the spot, and not they alone, for their passionate drivers, sometimes tumbling down in their energy, are crushed to death beneath the wheels. But it was good five hundred years ago, and it must be good now, and a railroad down one of these steeps (the easiest thing in the world) would be flat blasphemy.

When we stood aside to see one of these cars, drawn by only a pair of oven (for it had but one small block of marble on it), coming down, I hailed, in my heart, the man who sat upon the heavy yoke, to keep it on the neck of the poor beasts-and who faced backward, not before him-as the very Devil of true despotism He had a great rod in his hand with an iron point, and when they could plough and force their way through the loose bed of the torrent no longer. and came to a stop, he poked it into their bodies, beat it on their heads, screwed it round and round in their nostrils, got them on a yard or two in the madness of intense pain, repeated all these persuasions, with increased intensity of purpose, when they stopped again, got them on once more, forced and goaded them to an abrupter point of the descent, and when their writhing and smarting, and the weight behind them, bore them plunging down the piecipice in a cloud of scattered water, whirled his rod above his head, and gave a great whoop and hallo, as if he had achieved something, and had no idea that they might shake him off, and blindly mash his brains upon the road in the noon-tide of his triumph

Standing in one of the many studii of Carrara, that afternoon—for it is a great workshop, full of beautifully-finished copies in marble of almost every figure, group, and bust we know—it seemed, at first, so strange to me that those exquisite shapes, replete with grace and thought and delicate repose, should grow out of all this toil and sweat and torture! But I soon found a parallel to it, and an explanation of it, in every virtue that springs up in miserable ground, and every good thing that has its birth in sorrow and distress. And, looking out of the sculptor's great window, upon the marble mountains, all red and glowing in the decline of day, but stern and solemn to the last, I thought, My God! how many quarries of human hearts and souls, capable of far more beautiful results, are left shut up and mouldering away, while pleasure-travellers through life avert their faces as they pass, and shudder at the gloom and ruggedness that conceal them!

The then reigning Duke of Modena, to whom this territory in part belonged, claimed the proud distinction of being the only sovereign in Europe who had not recognized LouisPhilippe as King of the French He was not a wag, but quite in earnest He was also much opposed to railroads, and if certain lines in contemplation by other potentates, on either side of him, had been executed, would have probably enjoyed the satisfaction of having an omnibus plying to and fro across his not very vast dominions, to forward travellers from one terminus to another

Carrara, shut in by great hills, is very picturesque and bold. Few tourists stay there, and the people are nearly all connected, in one way or other, with the working of marble. There are also villages among the caves, where the workmen live. It contains a beautiful little Theatre, newly built, and it is an interesting custom there to form the chorus of labourers in the marble quairies, who are self-taught and sing by ear. I heard them in a comic opera, and in an act of "Norma," and they acquitted themselves very well, unlike the common people of Italy generally, who (with some exceptions among the Neapolitans) sing vilely out of tune, and have very disagreeable singing voices.

From the summit of a lofty hill beyond Carrara, the first view of the fertile plain in which the town of Pisa lies—with Leghorn, a purple spot in the flat distance—is enchanting. Nor is it only distance that lends enchantment to the view, for the fruitful country, and rich woods of olive-trees through which the road subsequently passes, render it delightful

The moon was shining when we approached Pisa, and for a long time we could see, behind the wall, the leaning Tower, all awry in the uncertain light—the shadowy original of the old pictures in school-books, setting forth "The Wonders of the World" Like most things connected in their first associations with school-books and school-times, it was too small I felt it keenly It was nothing like so high above the wall as I had hoped It was another of the many deceptions practised by Mr Harris, Bookseller, at the corner of St Paul's Churchyard, London His Tower was a fiction, but this was a reality—and, by comparison, a short reality Still, it looked very well and very strange, and was quite as much out of the perpendicular as Harris had represented it to be. The quiet air of Pisa too, the big guard-house at the gate, with only two little soldiers in it, the streets with scarcely

any show of people in them, and the Arno, flowing quaintly through the centre of the town, were excellent. So I bore no malice in my heart against Mr Harris (remembering his good intentions), but forgave him before dinner, and went out, full of confidence, to see the Tower next morning

I might have known better, but, somehow, I had expected to see it casting its long shadow on a public street where people came and went all day. It was a surprise to me to find it in a grave retired place, apart from the general resort, and carpeted with smooth green turf. But the group of buildings clustered on and about this verdant carpet—comprising the Tower, the Baptistery, the Cathedral, and the Church of the Campo Santo—is perhaps the most remarkable and beautiful in the whole world, and from being clustered there together, away from the ordinary transactions and details of the town, they have a singularly venerable and impressive character. It is the architectural essence of a nich old city, with all its common life and common habitations pressed out, and filtered away.

SISMONDI compares the Tower to the usual pictorial representations in children's books of the Tower of Babel It is a happy simile, and conveys a better idea of the building than chapters of laboured description Nothing can exceed the grace and lightness of the structure, nothing can be more remarkable than its general appearance. In the course of the ascent to the top (which is by an easy staircase), the inclination is not very apparent, but at the summit it becomes so, and gives one the sensation of being in a ship that has heeled over through the action of an ebb-tide. The effect upon the low side, so to speak-looking over from the gallery, and seeing the shaft recede to its base-is very startling, and I saw a nervous traveller hold on to the Tower involuntarily after glancing down, as if he had some idea of propping it up The view within from the ground-looking up as through a slanted tube—is also very curious tainly inclines as much as the most sanguine tourist could The natural impulse of ninety-nine people out of a hundred, who were about to recline on the grass below it, to rest and contemplate the adjacent buildings, would probably

be not to take up their position under the leaning side, it is so very much aslant

The manifold beauties of the Cathedral and Baptistery need no recapitulation from me, though in this case, as in a hundred others, I find it difficult to separate my own delight in recalling them from your weariness in having them recalled There is a picture of St Agnes, by Andrea del Sarto, in the former, and there are a variety of rich columns in the

latter, that tempt me strongly

It is, I hope, no breach of my resolution not to be tempted into elaborate descriptions, to remember the Campo Santo. where grass grown graves are dug in earth brought more than six hundred years ago from the Holy Land, and where there are, surrounding them, such cloisters, with such playing lights and shadows falling through their delicate tracery on the stone pavement, as surely the dullest memory could never forget On the walls of this solemn and lovely place are ancient frescoes very much obliterated and decayed, but very curious As usually happens in almost any collection of paintings of any sort in Italy, where there are many heads, there is in one of them a striking accidental likeness of Napoleon At one time I used to please my fancy with the speculation whether these old painters at their work had a foreboding knowledge of the man who would one day arise to wreak such destruction upon art, whose soldiers would make targets of great pictures, and stable their horses among triumphs of architecture But the same Corsican face is so plentiful in some parts of Italy at this day, that a more commonplace solution of the coincidence is unavoidable

If Pisa be the seventh wonder of the world in right of its Tower, it may claim to be, at least, the second or third in right of its beggars. They waylay the unhappy visitor at every turn, escort him to every door he enters at, and he in wait for him, with strong reinforcements, at every door by which they know he must come out. The grating of the portal on its hinges is the signal for a general shout, and the moment he appears, he is hemmed in and fallen on by heaps of rags and personal distortions. The beggars seem to embody all the trade and enterprise of Pisa. Nothing else is stirring but warm air.

the fronts of the sleepy houses look like backs. They are all so still and quiet, and unlike houses with people in them, that the greater part of the city has the appearance of a city at daybreak, or during a general siesta of the population. Or it is yet more like those backgrounds of houses in common prints or old engravings, where windows and doors are squarely indicated, and one figure (a beggar, of course) is seen walking off by itself into illimitable per-

spective Not so Leghorn (made illustrious by Smollett's grave). which is a thriving, business-like, matter-of-fact place, where idleness is shouldered out of the way by commerce The regulations observed there, in reference to trade and merchants, are very liberal and free, and the town, of course, benefits by them Leghorn has a bad name in connection with stabbers—and with some justice, it must be allowed, for not many years ago there was an assassination club there, the members of which bore no ill-will to anybody in particular, but stabbed people (quite strangers to them) in the streets at night, for the pleasure and excitement of the recreation I think the president of this amiable society was a shoemaker He was taken, however, and the club was broken up It would, probably, have disappeared, in the natural course of events, before the railroad between Leghorn and Pisa, which is a good one, and has already begun to astonish Italy with a precedent of punctuality, order, plain dealing, and improvement—the most dangerous and heretical astonisher of all There must have been a slight sensation as of earthquake, surely, in the Vatican when the first Italian railroad was thrown open

Returning to Pisa, and hiring a good-tempered Vetturino and his four horses to take us on to Rome, we travelled through pleasant Tuscan villages and cheerful scenery all day. The roadside crosses in this part of Italy are numerous and curious. There is seldom a figure on the cross, though there is sometimes a face, but they are remarkable for being garnished with little models in wood of every possible object that can be connected with the Saviour's death. The cock that crowed when Peter had denied his Master thrice is usually perched on the tip-top, and an ornithological phenomenomenon.

enon he generally is Under him is the inscription. Then, hung on to the cross-beam, are the spear, the reed with the sponge of vinegar and water at the end, the coat without seam for which the soldiers cast lots, the dice-box with which they threw for it, the hammer that drove in the nails, the pincers that pulled them out, the ladder which was set against the cross, the crown of thorns, the instrument of flagellation, the lanthorn with which Mary went to the tomb (I suppose), and the sword with which Peter smote the servant of the high priest—a perfect toy-shop of little objects, repeated at every four or five miles all along the highway

On the evening of the second day from Pisa we reached the beautiful old city of Siena There was what they called a Carnival in progress, but as its secret lay in a score or two of melancholy people walking up and down the principal street in common toy-shop masks, and being more melancholy, if possible, than the same sort of people in England, I say no more of it We went on, betimes next morning, to see the Cathedral, which is wonderfully picturesque inside and out, especially the latter, also the market-place, or great Piazza, which is a large square with a great broken-nosed fountain in it, some quaint Gothic houses, and a high square brick tower, outside the top of which-a curious feature in such views in Italy-hangs an enormous It is like a bit of Venice without the water are some curious old Palazzi in the town, which is very ancient, and without having (for me) the interest of Verona or Genoa, it is very dreamy and fantastic, and most interesting

We went on again, as soon as we had seen these things, and going over a rather bleak country (there had been nothing but vines until now—mere walking-sticks at that season of the year), stopped, as usual, between one and two hours in the middle of the day, to rest the horses, that being a part of every Vetturino contract. We then went on again, through a region gradually becoming bleaker and wilder, until it became as bare and desolate as any Scottish moors. Soon after dark we halted for the night, at the osteria of La Scala—a perfectly lone house, where the family were sitting round a great fire in the kitchen, raised on a stone platform three or

four feet high, and big enough for the roasting of an ox. On the upper and only other floor of this hotel there was a great wild rambling sala, with one very little window in a by-corner, and four black doors opening into four black bedrooms in various directions—to say nothing of another large black door opening into another large black sala, with the staircase coming abruptly through a kind of trap-door in the floor, and the rafters of the roof looming above, a suspicious little press skulking in one obscure corner, and all the knives in the house lying about in various directions. The fireplace was of the purest Italian architecture, so that it was perfectly impossible to see it for the smoke. The waitress was like a dramatic brigand's wife, and wore the same style of dress upon her head. The dogs barked like mad, the echoes returned the compliments bestowed upon them, there was not another house within twelve miles, and things had a

dreary and rather a cut-throat appearance

They were not improved by rumours of robbers having come out, strong and boldly, within a few nights, and of their having stopped the mail very near that place. They were known to have waylaid some travellers not long before, on Mount Vesuvius itself, and were the talk at all the roadside inns As they were no business of ours, however (for we had very little with us to lose), we made ourselves merry on the subject, and were very soon as comfortable as need be We had the usual dinner in this solitary house, and a very good dinner it is, when you are used to it There is something with a vegetable or some rice in it, which is a sort of shorthand or arbitrary character for soup, and which tastes very well, when you have flavoured it with plenty of grated cheese, lots of salt, and abundance of pepper There is the half fowl of which this soup has been made There is a stewed pigeon, with the gizzards and livers of himself and other birds stuck all round him There is a bit of roast beef, the size of a small French roll There are a scrap of Parmesan cheese, and five little withered apples, all huddled together on a small plate, and crowding one upon the other, as if each were trying to save itself from the chance of being eaten. Then there is coffee, and then there is bed You don't mind brief forces and then there is bed don't mind brick floors, you don't mind yawning doors, nor

banging windows, you don't mind your own horses being stabled under the bed, and so close that every time a horse coughs or sneezes he wakes you. If you are good-humoured to the people about you, and speak pleasantly, and look cheerful, take my word for it you may be well entertained in the very worst Italian inn, and always in the most obleging manner, and may go from one end of the country to the other (despite all stories to the contrary) without any great trial of your patience anywhere. Especially when you get such wine in flasks as the Orvieto and the Monte Pulciano.

It was a bad morning when we left this place, and we went, for twelve miles, over a country as barren, as stony, and as wild as Cornwall in England, until we came to Radicofani, where there is a ghostly, goblin inn—once a hunting-seat, belonging to the Dukes of Tuscany. It is full of such rambling corridors and gaunt rooms that all the murdering and phantom tales that ever were written might have originated in that one house. There are some horrible old Palazza in Genoa—one in particular, not unlike it, outside, but there is a winding, creaking, wormy, rustling, door-opening, footon-staircase-falling character about this Radicofani Hotel, such as I never saw anywhere else. The town, such as it is, hangs on a hillside above the house, and in front of it. The inhabitants are all beggars, and as soon as they see a carriage coming, they swoop down upon it, like so many birds of prev.

When we got on the mountain pass, which lies beyond this place, the wind (as they had forewarned us at the inn) was so terrific, that we were obliged to take my other half out of the carriage, lest she should be blown over, carriage and all, and to hang to it, on the windy side (as well as we could for laughing), to prevent its going Heaven knows where. For mere force of wind, this land-storm might have competed with an Atlantic gale, and had a reasonable chance of coming off victorious. The blast came sweeping down great gullies in a range of mountains on the right, so that we looked with positive awe at a great morass on the left, and saw that there was not a bush or twig to hold by It seemed as if, once blown from our feet, we must be swept out to sea, or away into space. There was snow, and hall, and rain, and light-

ning, and thunder, and there were rolling mists, travelling with incredible velocity. It was dark, awful, and solitary to the last degree. There were mountains above mountains, veiled in angry clouds, and there was such a wrathful, rapid, violent, tumultuous hurry everywhere, as rendered the scene

unspeakably exciting and grand

It was a relief to get out of it, notwithstanding, and to cross even the dismal dirty Papal Frontier After passing through two little towns, in one of which, Acquapendente, there was also a "Carnival" in progress—consisting of one man dressed and masked as a woman, and one woman dressed and masked as a man, walking ankle-deep through the muddy streets, in a very melancholy manner—we came at dusk within sight of the Lake of Bolsena, on whose bank there is a little town of the same name, much celebrated for malaria. With the exception of this poor place, there is not a cottage on the banks of the lake, or near it (for nobody dare sleep there), not a boat upon its waters, not a stick or stake to break the dismal monotony of seven-and-twenty watery miles We were late in getting in, the roads being very bad from heavy rains, and after dark, the dullness of the scene was quite intolerable

We entered on a very different and a finer scene of desolation next night at sunset We had passed through Montefiaschone (famous for its wine) and Viterbo (for its fountains), and after climbing up a long hill of eight or ten miles' extent. came suddenly upon the margin of a solitary lake-in one part very beautiful, with a luxuriant wood, in another, very barren, and shut in by bleak volcanic hills Where this lake flows there stood of old a city It was swallowed up one day, and in its stead this water rose. There are ancient traditions (common to many parts of the world) of the ruined city having been seen below, when the water was clear, but however that may be, from this spot of earth it vanished The ground came bubbling up above it, and the water too. and here they stand, like ghosts on whom the other world closed suddenly, and who have no means of getting back again. They seem to be waiting the course of ages, for the next earthquake in that place, when they will plunge below the ground, at its first yawning, and be seen no more The

unhappy city below is not more lost and dreary than these fire-charred hills and the stagnant water above. The red sun looked strangely on them, as with the knowledge that they were made for caverns and darkness, and the melancholy water oozed and sucked the mud, and crept quietly among the marshy grass and reeds, as if the overthrow of all the ancient towers and house-tops, and the death of all the ancient people born and bred there, were yet heavy on its conscience

A short ride from this lake brought us to Ronciglione—a little town like a large pig-sty—where we passed the night Next morning, at seven o'clock, we started for Rome

As soon as we were out of the pig-sty, we entered on the Campagna Romana—an undulating flat (as you know), where few people can live, and where, for miles and miles, there is nothing to relieve the terrible monotony and gloom all kinds of country that could, by possibility, lie outside the gates of Rome, this is the aptest and fittest burial-ground for the Dead City So sad, so quiet, so sullen, so secret in its covering up of great masses of ruin, and hiding them, so like the waste places into which the men possessed with devils used to go and howl, and rend themselves, in the old days of Jerusalem We had to traverse thirty miles of this Campagna, and for two-and-twenty we went on and on, seeing nothing but now and then a lonely house, or a villainouslooking shepherd, with matted hair all over his face, and himself wrapped to the chin in a frowzy brown mantle, tending his sheep. At the end of that distance, we stopped to refresh the horses, and to get some lunch, in a common, malaria-shaken, despondent little public-house, whose every inch of wall and beam, inside, was (according to custom) painted and decorated in a way so miserable that every room looked like the wrong side of another room, and with its wretched imitation of drapery, and lop-sided little daubs of lyres, seemed to have been plundered from behind the scenes of some travelling circus

When we were fairly off again, we began, in a perfect fever, to strain our eyes for Rome, and when, after another mile or two, the Eternal City appeared at length in the distance, it looked like—I am half afraid to write the word—

hke LONDON !!! There it lay, under a thick cloud, with innumerable towers, and steeples, and roofs of houses rising up into the sky, and high above them all, one Dome swear that, keenly as I felt the seeming absurdity of the comparison, it was so like London at that distance, that if you could have shown it me in a glass, I should have taken it for nothing else

ROME

We entered the Eternal City at about four o'clock in the afternoon, on the thirtieth of January, by the Porta del Popolo, and came immediately—it was a dark, muddy day, and there had been heavy rain—on the skirts of the Carnival We did not then know that we were only looking at the fag end of the masks, who were driving slowly round and round the Piazza until they could find a promising opportunity for falling into the stream of carriages, and getting in good time into the thick of the festivity, and coming among them so abruptly, all travel-stained and weary, was not coming very

well prepared to enjoy the scene

We had crossed the Tiber by the Ponte Molle two or three miles before It had looked as yellow as it ought to look. and, hurrying on between its worn-away and miry banks, had a promising aspect of desolation and ruin The masquerade dresses on the fringe of the Carnival did great violence to this promise There were no great ruins, no solemn tokens of antiquity to be seen they all lie on the other side of the There seemed to be long streets of commonplace shops and houses, such as are to be found in any European town, there were busy people, equipages, ordinary walkers to and fro-a multitude of chattering strangers It was no more my Rome—the Rome of anybody's fancy, man or boy, degraded and fallen and lying asleep in the sun among a heap of ruins-than the Place de la Concorde in Paris is cloudy sky, a dull cold rain, and muddy streets, I was prepared for, but not for this, and I confess to having gone to bed that night in a very indifferent humour, and with a very considerably quenched enthusiasm

Immediately on going out next day, we hurried off to

St Peter's It looked immense in the distance, but dis tinctly and decidedly small, by comparison, on a near approach The beauty of the Piazza in which it stands, with its clusters of exquisite columns and its gushing fountains—so fresh, so broad and free and beautiful—nothing can exaggerate The first burst of the interior, in all its expansive majesty and glory, and most of all, the looking up into the Dome, is a sensation never to be forgotten. But there were preparations for a festa the pillars of stately marble were swathed in some impertinent frippery of red and yellow, the altar, and entrance to the subterranean chapel, which is before it, in the centre of the church, were like a goldsmith's shop, or one of the opening scenes in a very lavish pantomime And though I had as high a sense of the beauty of the building (I hope) as it is possible to entertain, I felt no very strong emotion I have been infinitely more affected in many English cathedrals when the organ has been playing, and in many English country churches when the congregation have been singing I had a much greater sense of mystery and wonder in the Cathedral of San Mark at Venice

When we came out of the church again (we stood nearly an hour staring up into the dome, and would not have "gone over" the Cathedral then for any money), we said to the coachman, "Go to the Coliseum" In a quarter of an hour or so he stopped at the gate, and we went in

It is no fiction, but plain, sober, honest truth, to say—so suggestive and distinct is it at this hour—that, for a moment, actually in passing in, they who will may have the whole great pile before them as it used to be, with thousands of eager faces staring down into the arena, and such a whirl of strife, and blood, and dust going on there, as no language can describe. Its solitude, its awful beauty, and its utter desolation strike upon the stranger the next moment like a softened sorrow, and never in his life, perhaps, will he be so moved and overcome by any sight, not immediately connected with his own affections and afflictions

To see it crumbling there, an inch a year—its walls and arches overgrown with green, its corridors open to the day, the long grass growing in its porches, young trees of vester-

day springing up on its ragged parapets, and bearing fruit. chance produce of the seeds dropped there by the birds who build their nests within its chinks and crannies, to see its Pit of Fight filled up with earth, and the peaceful Cross planted in the centre, to climb into its upper halls, and look down on ruin, ruin, ruin, all about it—the triumphal arches of Constantine, Septimius Severus, and Titus, the Roman Forum, the Palace of the Cæsars, the temples of the old religion, fallen down and gone,-is to see the ghost of old Rome, wicked, wonderful old city, haunting the very ground on which its people trod It is the most impressive, the most stately, the most solemn, grand, majestic, mournful sight conceivable Never, in its bloodiest prime, can the sight of the gigantic Coliseum, full and running over with the lustiest life, have moved one heart as it must move all who look upon it now, a ruin Gop be thanked—a ruin!

As it tops the other runs—standing there, a mountain among graves—so do its ancient influences outlive all other remnants of the old mythology and old butchery of Rome, in the nature of the fierce and cruel Roman people The Italian face changes as the visitor approaches the city its beauty becomes devilish, and there is scarcely one countenance in a hundred among the common people in the streets that would not be at home and happy in a renovated Coliseum to-morrow.

Here was Rome indeed at last, and such a Rome as no one can imagine in its full and awful grandeur! We wandered out upon the Appian Way, and then went on, through miles of ruined tombs and broken walls, with here and there a desolate and uninhabited house-past the Circus of Romulus. where the course of the chariots, the stations of the judges, competitors, and spectators, are yet as plainly to be seen as in old time, past the tomb of Cecilia Metella, past all inclosure, hedge, or stake, wall or fence, away upon the open Campagna, where on that side of Rome nothing is to be beheld but Rum Except where the distant Apennines bound the view upon the left, the whole wide prospect is one field of ruin Broken aqueducts, left in the most picturesque and beautiful clusters of arches, broken temples, broken tombs A desert of decay, sombre and desolate beyond all

expression, and with a history in every stone that strews the ground

On Sunday the Pope assisted in the performance of High Mass at St Peter's The effect of the Cathedral on my mind, on that second visit, was exactly what it was at first, and what it remains after many visits. It is not religiously impressive or affecting It is an immense edifice, with no one point for the mind to rest upon, and it tires itself with wandering round and round The very purpose of the place is not expressed in anything you see there unless you examine its details, and all examination of details is incompatible with the place itself It might be a Pantheon, or a Senate House, or a great architectural trophy, having no other object than an architectural triumph There is a black statue of St Peter, to be sure, under a red canopy, which is larger than life, and which is constantly having its great toe kissed by good Catholics You cannot help seeing that, it is so very prominent and popular But it does not heighten the effect of the temple as a work of art, and it is not expressive -to me at least-of its high purpose

A large space behind the altar was fitted up with boxes, shaped like those at the Italian Opera in England, but in their decoration much more gaudy. In the centre of the kind of theatre thus railed off was a canopied dais with the Pope's chair upon it The pavement was covered with a carpet of the brightest green, and what with this green, and the intolerable reds and crimsons, and gold borders of the hangings, the whole concern looked like a stupendous bonbon On either side of the altar was a large box for lady strangers These were filled with ladies in black dresses and black veils The gentlemen of the Pope's Guard, in red coats, leather breeches, and jack-boots, guarded all this reserved space, with drawn swords that were flashy in every sense, and from the altar all down the nave a broad lane was kept clear by the Pope's Swiss Guard, who wear a quaint striped surcoat, and striped tight legs, and carry halberds like those which are usually shouldered by those theatrical supernumeranes who never can get off the stage fast enough.

camp after the open country, held by the opposite forces, has been split up the middle by a convulsion of Nature
I got upon the border of the green carpet, in company

with a great many other gentlemen, attired in black (no other passport is necessary), and stood there at my ease during the performance of Mass The singers were in a crib of wire-work (like a large meat-safe or bird-cage) in one corner, and sang most atrociously All about the green carpet there was a slowly moving crowd of people, talking to each other, staring at the Pope through eye-glasses, defrauding one another, in moments of partial curiosity, out of precarious seats on the bases of pillars, and grinning hideously at the ladies Dotted here and there were little knots of friars (Francescáni, or Cuppuccíni, in their coarse brown dresses and peaked hoods), making a strange contrast to the gaudy ecclesiastics of higher degree, and having their humility gratified to the utmost by being shouldered about, and elbowed right and left on all sides. Some of these had muddy sandals and umbrellas, and stained garments, having trudged in from the country The faces of the greater part were as coarse and heavy as their dress, their dogged, stupid, monotonous stare at all the glory and splendour having something in it half miserable and half ridiculous

Upon the green carpet itself, and gathered round the altar, was a perfect army of cardinals and priests, in red, gold, purple, violet, white, and fine linen Stragglers from these went to and fro among the crowd, conversing two and two, or giving and receiving introductions and exchanging salutations, other functionaries in black gowns, and other functionaries in court-dresses, were similarly engaged. In the midst of all these, and stealthy Jesuits creeping in and out, and the extreme restlessness of the Youth of England, who were perpetually wandering about, some few steady persons in black cassocks, who had knelt down with their faces to the wall, and were poring over their missals, became, unintentionally, a sort of humane man-traps, and with their own

devout legs tripped up other people's by the dozen

There was a great pile of candles lying down on the floor near me, which a very old man in a rusty black gown with an open work tippet, like a summer ornament for a fireplace

in tissue-paper, made himself very busy in dispensing to all the ecclesiastics—one apiece. They loitered about with these for some time, under their arms like walking-sticks, or in their hands like truncheons. At a certain period of the ceremony, however, each carried his candle up to the Pope, laid it across his two knees to be blessed, took it back again, and filed off. This was done in a very attenuated procession, as you may suppose, and occupied a long time—not because it takes long to bless a candle through and through, but because there were so many candles to be blessed. At last they were all blessed, and then they were all lighted, and then the Pope was taken up, chair and all, and carried round the church.

I must say that I never saw anything, out of November, so like the popular English commemoration of the fifth of that month A bundle of matches and a lantern would have made it perfect. Nor did the Pope himself at all mar the resemblance, though he has a pleasant and venerable face, for as this part of the ceremony makes him giddy and sick, he shuts his eyes when it is performed, and having his eyes shut, and a great mitre on his head, and his head itself wagging to and fro as they shook him in carrying, he looked as if his mask were going to tumble off The two immense fans which are always borne, one on either side of him, accompanied him, of course, on this occasion As they carried him along, he blessed the people with the mystic sign, and as he passed them, they kneeled down When he had made the round of the church, he was brought back again, and, if I am not mistaken, this performance was repeated, in the whole, three times There was, certainly, nothing solemn or effective in it, and certainly very much that was droll and tawdry But this remark applies to the whole ceremony, except the raising of the Host, when every man in the Guard dropped on one knee instantly, and dashed his naked sword on the ground, which had a fine effect

The next time I saw the Cathedral was some two or three weeks afterwards, when I climbed up into the ball, and then, the hangings being taken down, and the carpet taken up, but all the framework left, the remnants of these decorations looked like an exploded cracker

The Friday and Saturday having been solemn Festa days, and Sunday being always a *dies non* in Carnival proceedings, we had looked forward, with some impatience and curiosity, to the beginning of the new week—Monday and Tuesday

being the two last and best days of the Carnival

On the Monday afternoon, at one or two o'clock, there began to be a great rattling of carriages into the courtyard of the hotel, a hurrying to and fro of all the servants in it, and now and then a swift shooting across some doorway or balcony of a straggling stranger in a fancy dress, not yet sufficiently well used to the same to wear it with confidence, and defy public opinion All the carriages were open, and had the linings carefully covered with white cotton or calico, to prevent their proper decorations from being spoiled by the incessant pelting of sugar-plums, and people were packing and cramming into every vehicle, as it waited for its occupants, enormous sacks and basketfuls of these confétti, together with such heaps of flowers, tied up in little nosegays, that some carriages were not only brimful of flowers, but literally running over-scattering, at every shake and jerk of the springs, some of their abundance on the ground Not to be behindhand in these essential particulars, we caused two very respectable sacks of sugar-plums (each about three feet high), and a large clothes-basket full of flowers, to be conveyed into our hired barouche with all speed, and from our place of observation, in one of the upper balconies of the hotel, we contemplated these arrangements with the liveliest satisfaction The carriages now beginning to take up their company, and move away, we got into ours, and drove off too, armed with little wire masks for our faces—the sugar-plums, like Falstaff's adulterated sack, having lime in their composition

The Corso is a street a mile long—a street of shops, and palaces, and private houses, sometimes opening into a broad piazza. There are verandas and balconies, of all shapes and sizes, to almost every house—not on one story alone, but often to one room or another on every story—put there in general with so little order or regularity, that if, year after year, and season after season, it had rained balconies, hailed balconies, snowed balconies, blown balconies, they could

scarcely have come into existence in a more disorderly

This is the great fountain-head and focus of the Carnival But all the streets in which the Carnival is held being vigilantly kept by dragoons, it is necessary for carriages, in the first instance, to pass, in line, down another thoroughfare, and so come into the Corso at the end remote from the Piázza del Popolo, which is one of its terminations Accordingly we fell into the string of coaches, and for some time jogged on quietly enough—now crawling on at a very slow walk, now trotting half a dozen yards, now backing fifty, and now stopping altogether, as the pressure in front obliged If any impetuous carriage dashed out of the rank and clattered forward with the wild idea of getting on faster, it was suddenly met or overtaken by a trooper on horseback, who, deaf as his own drawn sword to all remonstrances, immediately escorted it back to the very end of the row, and made it a dim speck in the remotest perspective sionally we interchanged a volley of confétti with the carriage next in front, or the carriage next behind, but, as yet, this capturing of stray and errant coaches by the military was the chief amusement.

Presently we came into a narrow street, where, besides one line of carriages going, there was another line of carriages returning Here the sugar-plums and the nosegays began to fly about pretty smartly, and I was fortunate enough to observe one gentleman attired as a Greek warnor catch a light-whiskered brigand on the nose (he was in the very act of tossing up a bouquet to a young lady in a first-floor window) with a precision that was much applauded by the As this victorious Greek was exchanging a bystanders facetious remark with a stout gentleman in a doorway-onehalf black and one-half white, as if he had been peeled up the middle-who had offered him his congratulations on this achievement, he received an orange from a house-top full on his left ear, and was much surprised, not to say discomfited. especially as he was standing up at the time, and in consequence of the carriage moving on suddenly, at the same moment, staggered ignominiously, and buried himself among his flowers

Some quarter of an hour of this sort of progress brought us to the Corso, and anything so gay, so bright, and lively as the whole scene there, it would be difficult to imagine From all the innumerable balconies—from the remotest and highest, no less than from the lowest and nearest-hangings of bright red, bright green, bright blue, white and gold, were fluttering in the brilliant sunlight From windows, and from parapets and tops of houses, streamers of the richest colours, and draperies of the gaudiest and most sparkling hues, were floating out upon the street The buildings seemed to have been literally turned inside out, and to have all their gaiety towards the highway Shop-fronts were taken down, and the windows filled with company, like boxes at a shining theatre, doors were carried off their hinges, and long tapestried groves, hung with garlands of flowers and evergreens, displayed within, builders' scaffoldings were gorgeous temples, radiant in silver, gold, and crimson, and in every nook and corner, from the pavement to the chimney-tops, where women's eyes could glisten, there they danced, and laughed, and sparkled, like the light in water Every sort of bewitching madness of dress was there Little preposterous scarlet jackets, quaint old stomachers, more wicked than the smartest bodices. Polish pelisses, strained and tight as ripe gooseberries, tiny Greek caps, all awry, and clinging to the dark hair, Heaven knows how, every wild, quaint, bold, shy, pettish, madcap fancy had its illustration in a dress, and every fancy was as dead forgotten by its owner, in the tumult of merriment, as if the three old aqueducts that still remain entire had brought Lethe into Rome, upon their sturdy arches, that morning

The carriages were now three abreast—in broader places four, often stationary for a long time together, always one close mass of variegated brightness, showing, the whole streetful, through the storm of flowers, like flowers of a larger growth themselves. In some, the horses were richly caparisoned in magnificent trappings, in others, they were decked from head to tail with flowing ribbons. Some were driven by coachmen with enormous double faces—one face leering at the horses, the other cocking its extraordinary eyes into the carriage, and both rattling again under the hail of sugar-plums. Other drivers were attired as women wearing

long ringlets and no bonnets, and looking more ridiculous in any real difficulty with the horses (of which, in such a concourse, there were a great many) than tongue can tell or pen describe Instead of sitting *in* the carriages, upon the seats, the handsome Roman women, to see and to be seen the better, sit in the heads of the barouches, at this time of general license, with their feet upon the cushions—and oh, the flowing skirts and dainty waists, the blessed shapes and laughing faces, the free, good-humoured, gallant figures that they make! There were great vans, too, full of handsome girls—thirty or more together, perhaps, and the broadsides that were poured into, and poured out of, these fairy fireships, splashed the air with flowers and bonbons for ten minutes at a time Carriages, delayed long in one place, would begin a deliberate engagement with other carriages, or with people at the lower windows, and the spectators at some upper balcony or window, joining in the fray, and attacking both parties, would empty down great bags of confétti, that descended like a cloud, and in an instant made them white as millers Still, carriages on carriages, dresses on dresses, colours on colours, crowds upon crowds, without end Men and boys clinging to the wheels of coaches, and holding on behind, and following in their wake, and diving in among the horses' feet to pick up scattered flowers to sell again, maskers on foot (the drollest generally) in fantastic exaggerations of court-dresses, surveying the throng through enormous eye-glasses, and always transported with an ecstasy of love on the discovery of any particularly old lady at a window, long strings of Policinelli, laying about them with blown bladders at the ends of sticks, a wagonful of madmen, screaming and tearing to the life, a coachful of grave Mamelukes, with their horse-tail standard set up in the midst, a party of gipsy-women engaged in terrific conflict with a shipful of sailors, a man-monkey on a pole, surrounded by strange animals with pigs' faces and lions' tails, carried under their arms, or worn gracefully over their shoulders, carriages on carnages, dresses on dresses, colours on colours, crowds upon crowds, without end Not many actual characters sustained, or represented, perhaps, considering the number dressed, but the main pleasure of the scene consisting in its

perfect good temper, in its bright and infinite and flashing variety, and in its entire abandonment to the mad humour of the time—an abandonment so perfect, so contagious, so irresistible, that the steadiest foreigner fights up to his middle in flowers and sugar-plums like the wildest Roman of them all, and thinks of nothing else till half-past four o'clock, when he is suddenly reminded (to his great regret) that this is not the whole business of his existence, by hearing the trumpets sound, and seeing the dragoons begin to clear the street

How it ever is cleared for the race that takes place at five, or how the horses ever go through the race without going over the people, is more than I can say But the carriages get out into the by-streets, or up into the Piazza del Popolo, and some people sit in temporary galleries in the latter place, and tens of thousands line the Corso on both sides, when the horses are brought out into the Piazza—to the foot of that same column which, for centuries, looked down upon the

games and chariot-races in the Circus Maximus

At a given signal they are started off Down the live lane, the whole length of the Corso, they fly like the wind-riderless, as all the world knows-with shining ornaments upon their backs, and twisted in their plaited manes, and with heavy little balls stuck full of spikes dangling at their sides, to goad them on The jingling of these trappings and the rattling of their hoofs upon the hard stones, the dash and fury of their speed along the echoing street, nay, the very cannon that are fired, these noises are nothing to the roaring of the multitude-their shouts, the clapping of their hands But it is soon over-almost instantaneously More cannon shake the town The horses have plunged into the carpets put across the street to stop them, the goal is reached, the prizes are won (they are given, in part, by the poor Jews, as a compromise for not running foot-races themselves), and there is an end to that day's sport

But if the scene be bright, and gay, and crowded, on the last day but one, it attains, on the concluding day, to such a height of glittering colour, swarming life, and frolicsome uproar, that the bare recollection of it makes me giddy at this moment. The same diversions, greatly heightened and intensified in the ardour with which they are pursued, go on

until the same hour The race is repeated, the cannon are fired, the shouting and clapping of hands are renewed, the cannon are fired again, the race is over, and the prizes are But the carriages—ankle-deep in sugar-plums within, and so be-flowered and dusty without, as to be-hardly recognizable for the same vehicles that they were three hours agoinstead of scampering off in all directions, throng into the Corso, where they are soon wedged together in a scarcely moving mass For the diversion of the Moccoletti, the last gay madness of the Carnival, is now at hand, and sellers of little tapers, like what are called Christmas candles in England, are shouting lustily on every side, "Moccoli, Moccoli! Ecco Moccoli!"—a new item in the tumult, quite abolishing that other item of "Ecco Fiori! Ecco Fior-r-r!" which has been making itself audible over all the rest, at intervals, the whole day through

As the bright hangings and dresses are all fading into one dull, heavy, uniform colour in the decline of the day, lights begin flashing here and there—in the windows, on the housetops, in the balconies, in the carriages, in the hands of the foot-passengers, little by little, gradually, gradually, more and more, until the whole long street is one great glare and blaze of fire. Then everybody present has but one engrossing object—that is, to extinguish other people's candles, and to keep his own alight, and everybody—man, woman, or child, gentleman or lady, prince or peasant, native or foreigner—yells and screams, and roars incessantly, as a taunt to the subdued, "Senza Moccolo! Senza Moccolo!" (Without a light! without a light!) until nothing is heard but a gigantic chorus of those two words, mingled with peals of laughter

The spectacle, at this time, is one of the most extraordinary that can be imagined. Carriages coming slowly by, with everybody standing on the seats or on the box, holding up their lights at arms'-length, for greater safety—some in paper shades, some with a bunch of undefended little tapers, kindled altogether, some with blazing torches, some with feeble little candles, men on foot, creeping along, among the wheels, watching their opportunity to make a spring at some particular light, and dash it out, other people climbing up

into carriages, to get hold of them by main force, others, chasing some unlucky wanderer round and round his own coach, to blow out the light he has begged or stolen somewhere, before he can ascend to his own company, and enable them to light their extinguished tapers, others, with their hats off, at a carriage-door, humbly beseeching some kindhearted lady to oblige them with a light for a cigar, and when she is in the fullness of doubt whether to comply or no, blowing out the candle she is guarding so tenderly with her little hand, other people at the windows, fishing for candles with lines and hooks, or letting down long willow-wands with handkerchiefs at the end, and flapping them out, dexterously, when the bearer is at the height of his triumph, others. biding their time in corners, with immense extinguishers like halberts, and suddenly coming down upon glorious torches, others, gathered round one coach, and sticking to it, others, raining oranges and nosegays at an obdurate little lantern, or regularly storming a pyramid of men holding up one man among them, who carries one feeble little wick above his head, with which he defies them all! Senza Moccolo! Senza Moccolo! Beautiful women, standing up in coaches, pointing in derision at extinguished lights, and clapping their hands, as they pass on, crying, "Senza Moccolo! Senza Moccolo!" low balconies full of lovely faces and gay dresses, struggling with assailants in the streets, some repressing them as they climb up, some bending down, some leaning over, some shrinking back-delicate arms and bosoms-graceful figures—glowing lights, fluttering dresses—Senza Moccolo. Senza Moccolo, Senza Moc-co-lo-o o o !--when in the wildest enthusiasm of the cry, and fullest ecstasy of the sport, the Ave Maria rings from the church steeples, and the Carnival is over in an instant—put out like a taper, with a breath!

There was a masquerade at the theatre at night, as dull and senseless as a London one, and only remarkable for the summary way in which the house was cleared at eleven o'clock, which was done by a line of soldiers forming along the wall, at the back of the stage, and sweeping the whole company out before them, like a broad broom. The game of the Moccoletti (the word, in the singular, Moccoletto, is the diminutive of Moccolo, and means a little lamp or candle-

muff) is supposed by some to be a ceremony of burlesque mourning for the death of the Carnival-candles being indispensable to Catholic grief But whether it be so, or be a remnant of the ancient Saturnalia, or an incorporation of both, or have its origin in anything else, I shall always remember it, and the frolic, as a brilliant and most captivating sight, no less remarkable for the unbroken good-humour of all concerned, down to the very lowest (and among those who scaled the carriages were many of the commonest men and boys), than for its innocent vivacity For, odd as it may seem to say so, of a sport so full of thoughtlessness and personal display, it is as free from any taint of immodesty as any general mingling of the two sexes can possibly be, and there seems to prevail, during its progress, a feeling of general, almost childish, simplicity and confidence, which one thinks of with a pang when the Ave Maria has rung it away, for a whole year

Availing ourselves of a part of the quiet interval between the termination of the Carnival and the beginning of the Holy Week—when everybody had run away from the one, and few people had yet begun to run back again for the other—we went conscientiously to work to see Rome And, by dint of going out early every morning, and coming back late every evening, and labouring hard all day, I believe we made acquaintance with every post and pillar in the city and the country round, and, in particular, explored so many churches, that I abandoned that part of the enterprise at last, before it was half finished, lest I should never, of my own accord, go to church again as long as I lived But I managed, almost every day, at one time or other, to get back to the Coliseum, and out upon the open Campagna beyond the Tomb of Cecilia Metella

We often encountered, in these expeditions, a company of English tourists, with whom I had an ardent but ungratified longing to establish a speaking acquaintance. They were one Mr Davis, and a small circle of friends. It was impossible not to know Mrs Davis's name, from her being always in great request among her party, and her party being everywhere. During the Holy Week they were in every

part of every scene of every ceremony For a fortnight or three weeks before it they were in every tomb, and every church, and every ruin, and every Picture Gallery, and I hardly ever observed Mrs Davis to be silent for a moment Deep underground, high up in St Peter's, out on the Campagna, and stifling in the Jews' quarter, Mrs Davis turned up, all the same. I don't think she ever saw anything, or ever looked at anything, and she had always lost something out of a straw hand-basket, and was trying to find it, with all her might and main, among an immense quantity of English halfpence, which lay, like sands upon the sea-shore, at the bottom of it. There was a professional Cicerone always attached to the party (which had been brought over from London, fifteen or twenty strong, by contract), and if he so much as looked at Mrs Davis, she invariably cut him short by saying, "There, God bless the man, don't wornt me! don't understand a word you say, and shouldn't if you was to talk till you was black in the face!" Mr Davis always had a snuff-coloured greatcoat on, and carried a great green umbrella in his hand, and had a slow curiosity constantly devouring him, which prompted him to do extraordinary things, such as taking the covers off urns in tombs and looking in at the ashes as if they were pickles, and tracing out inscriptions with the ferrule of his umbrella, and saying, with intense thoughtfulness, "Here's a B, you see, and there's a R, and this is the way we goes on in, is it?" His antiquarian habits occasioned his being frequently in the rear of the rest, and one of the agonies of Mrs Davis, and the party in general, was an ever-present fear that Davis would be lost caused them to scream for him, in the strangest places, and at the most improper seasons. And when he came, slowly emerging out of some sepulchre or other, like a peaceful Ghoul, saying, "Here I am " Mrs Davis invariably replied, "You'll be buried alive in a foreign country, Davis, and it's no use trying to prevent you!"

Mr and Mrs Davis, and their party, had probably been brought from London in about nine or ten days Eighteen hundred years ago, the Roman legions under Claudrus protested against being led into Mr and Mrs. Davis's country,

urging that it lay beyond the limits of the world!

Among what may be called the Cubs or minor Lions of Rome, there was one that amused me mightily It is always to be found there, and its den is on the great flight of steps that lead from the Piázza di Spagna to the church of Trinita In plainer words, these steps are the great place of resort for the artists' "Models," and there they are constantly waiting to be hired The first time I went up there I could not conceive why the faces seemed familiar to me, why they appeared to have beset me, for years, in every possible variety of action and costume, and how it came to pass that they started up before me, in Rome, in the broad day, like so many saddled and bridled nightmares found that we had made acquaintance, and improved it, for several years, on the walls of various Exhibition Calleries There is one old gentleman, with long white hair and an immense beard, who to my knowledge has gone half through the catalogue of the Royal Academy This is the venerable or patriarchal model He carries a long staff, and every knot and twist in that staff I have seen, faithfully delineated, innumerable times There is another man in a blue cloak, who always pretends to be asleep in the sun (when there is any), and who, I need not say, is always very wide awake, and very attentive to the disposition of his legs This is the dolce far mente model There is another man in a brown cloak, who leans against a wall, with his arms folded in his mantle, and looks out of the corners of his eyes, which are just visible beneath his broad slouched hat This is the assassin model There is another man, who constantly looks over his own shoulder, and is always going away, but never This is the haughty or scornful model Domestic Happiness, and Holy Families, they should come very cheap, for there are lumps of them, all up the steps, and the cream of the thing is, that they are all the falsest vagabonds in the world, especially made up for the purpose, and having no counterparts in Rome or any other part of the habitable globe

My recent mention of the Carnival reminds me of its being said to be a mock mourning (in the ceremony with which it closes) for the gaieties and merry-makings before Lent, and this again reminds me of the real funerals and mourning processions of Rome, which, like those in most other parts of Italy, are rendered chiefly remarkable to a foreigner by the indifference with which the mere clay is universally regarded after life has left it. And this is not from the survivors having had time to dissociate the memory of the dead from their well-remembered appearance and form on earth, for the interment follows too speedily after death for that, almost always taking place within four-and-twenty hours, and, sometimes, within twelve

At Rome there is the same arrangement of pits in a great, bleak, open, dreary space, that I have already described as existing in Genoa When I visited it, at noonday, I saw a solitary coffin of plain deal-uncovered by any shroud or pall, and so slightly made that the hoof of any wandering mule would have crushed it in-carelessly tumbled down, all on one side, on the door of one of the pits, and there left, by itself, in the wind and sunshine "How does it come to be left here?" I asked the man who showed me the place "It was brought here half an hou ago, Signore," he said. I remembered to have met the procession, on its return, straggling away at a good round pace "When will it be put in the pit?" I asked him "When the cart comes, and it is opened to-night," he said "How much does it cost to be brought here in this way, instead of coming in the cart?" I asked him "Ten scudi," he said (about two pounds two-and-sixpence, English) "The other bodies, for whom nothing is paid, are taken to the church of the Santa Maria della Consolázione," he continued, "and brought here all together in the cart at night" I stood, a moment, looking at the coffin, which had two initial letters scrawled upon the top, and turned away with an expression in my face, I suppose, of not much liking its exposure in that manner, for he said, shrugging his shoulders with great vivacity, and giving a pleasant smile, "But he's dead, Signore, he's dead Why not?"

Among the innumerable churches, there is one I must select for separate mention. It is the church of the Ara Cœli, supposed to be built on the site of the old Temple of Jupiter Feretrius, and approached, on one side, by a long steep flight of steps, which seem incomplete without some

group of bearded soothsayers on the top It is remarkable for the possession of a miraculous Bambino, or wooden doll, representing the Infant Saviour, and I first saw this miraculous Bambino, in legal phrase, in manner following, that is to

say ---

We had strolled into the church one afternoon, and were looking down its long vista of gloomy pillars (for all these ancient churches built upon the ruins of old temples are dark and sad), when the Brave came running in, with a grin upon his face that stretched it from ear to ear, and implored us to follow him, without a moment's delay, as they were going to show the Bambino to a select party We accordingly hurried off to a sort of chapel, or sacristy, hard by the chief altar, but not in the church itself, where the select party, consisting of two or three Catholic gentlemen and ladies (not Italians). were already assembled, and where one hollow-cheeked young monk was lighting up divers candles, while another, was putting on some clerical robes over his coarse brown The candles were on a kind of altar, and above it were two delectable figures, such as you would see at any English fair, representing the Holy Virgin and Saint Joseph, as I suppose, bending in devotion over a wooden box, or coffer, which was shut

The hollow-cheeked monk, number One, having finished lighting the candles, went down on his knees, in a corner, before this set-piece, and the monk number Two, having put on a pair of highly-ornamented and gold-bespattered gloves, lifted down the coffer, with great reverence, and set it on the altar Then, with many genuflections, and muttering certain prayers, he opened it, and let down the front, and took off sundry coverings of satin and lace from the inside The ladies had been on their knees from the commencement, and the gentlemen now dropped down devoutly, as he exposed to view a little wooden doll, in face very like General Tom Thumb, the American Dwarf-gorgeously dressed in satin and gold lace, and actually blazing with rich jewels There was scarcely a spot upon its little breast, or neck, or stomach but was sparkling with the costly offerings of the Faithful Presently he lifted it out of the box, and carrying it round among the kneelers, set its face against

the forehead of every one, and tendered its clumsy foot to them to kiss—a ceremony which they all performed, down to a dirty little ragamuffin of a boy who had walked in from the street. When this was done, he laid it in the box again, and the company, rising, drew near, and commended the jewels in whispers. In good time, he replaced the coverings, shut up the box, put it back in its place, locked up the whole concern (Holy Family and all) behind a pair of folding-doors, took off his priestly vestments, and received the customary "small charge," while his companion, by means of an extinguisher fastened to the end of a long stick, put out the lights, one after another. The candles being all extinguished, and the money all collected, they retired, and so did the spectators

I met this same Bambino in the street a short time afterwards, going, in great state, to the house of some sick person. It is taken to all parts of Rome for this purpose constantly, but I understand that it is not always as successful as could be wished, for, making its appearance at the bedside of weak and nervous people in extremity, accompanied by a numerous escort, it not unfrequently frightens them to death. It is most popular in cases of child-birth, where it has done such wonders, that if a lady be longer than usual in getting through her difficulties, a messenger is dispatched, with all speed, to solicit the immediate attendance of the Bambino, It is a very valuable property, and much confided in, espe-

cially by the religious body to whom it belongs

I am happy to know that it is not considered immaculate by some who are good Catholics, and who are behind the scenes, from what was told me by the near relation of a Priest, himself a Catholic, and a gentleman of learning and intelligence. This Priest made my informant promise that he would, on no account, allow the Bambino to be borne into the bedroom of a sick lady, in whom they were both interested. "For," said he, "if they (the monks) trouble her with it, and intrude themselves into her room, it will certainly kill her." My informant accordingly looked out of the window when it came, and, with many thanks, declined to open the door. He endeavoured, in another case of which he had no other knowledge than such as he gained as

a passer-by at the moment, to prevent its being carried into

a small unwholesome chamber, where a poor girl was dying But he strove against it unsuccessfully, and she expired while the crowd were pressing round her bed Among the people who drop into St Peter's at their leisure, to kneel on the pavement and say a quiet prayer, there are certain schools and seminaries, priestly and otherwise, that come in, twenty or thirty strong. These boys always kneel down in single file, one behind the other, with a tall grim master in a black gown bringing up the rear—like a pack of cards arranged to be tumbled down at a touch, with a disproportionately large Knave of clubs at the end When they have had a minute or so at the chief altar, they scramble up, and filing off to the chapel of the Madonna, or the sacrament, flop down again in the same order, so that if anybody did stumble against the master, a general and sudden overthrow of the whole line must inevitably ensue

The scene in all the churches is the strangest possible The same monotonous, heartless, drowsy chanting, always going on, the same dark building, darker from the brightness of the street without, the same lamps dimly burning, the self-same people kneeling here and there, turned towards you, from one altar or other, the same priest's back, with the same large cross embroidered on it, however different in size, in shape, in wealth, in architecture, this church is from that, it is the same thing still. There are the same dirty beggars stopping in their muttered prayers to beg, the same miserable cripples exhibiting their deformity at the doors, the same blind men rattling little pots like kitchen pepper-casters (their depositories for alms), the same preposterous crowns of silver stuck upon the painted heads of single saints and Virgins in crowded pictures, so that a little figure on a mountain has a head-dress bigger than the temple in the foreground, or adjacant miles of landscape, the same favourite shrine or figure, smothered with little silver hearts and crosses, and the like (the staple trade and show of all the jewellers), the same odd mixture of respect and indecorum, faith and phlegm-kneeling on the stones, and spitting on them loudly, getting up from prayers to

beg a little, or to pursue some other worldly matter, and then kneeling down again, to resume the contrite supplication at the point where it was interrupted. In one church, a kneeling lady got up from her prayer for a moment, to offer us her card as a teacher of Music, and in another, a sedate gentleman with a very thick walking-staff arose from his devotions to belabour his dog, who was growling at another dog, and whose yelps and howls resounded through the church as his master quietly relapsed into his former train of meditation—keeping his eye upon the dog, at the same time, nevertheless

Above all, there is always a receptacle for the contributions of the Faithful, in some form or other Sometimes it is a money-box set up between the worshipper and the wooden life-size figure of the Redeemer, sometimes it is a little chest for the maintenance of the Virgin, sometimes an appeal on behalf of a popular Bambino, sometimes a bag at the end of a long stick, thrust among the people here and there, and vigilantly jingled, by an active Sacristan but there it always is, and, very often, in many shapes in the same church, and doing pretty well in all Nor is it wanting in the open airthe streets and roads-for often as you are walking along, thinking about anything rather than a tin canister, that object pounces out upon you from a little house by the wayside, and on its top is painted, "For the Souls in Purgatory," an appeal which the bearer repeats a great many times, as he rattles it before you, much as Punch rattles the cracked bell which his sanguine disposition makes an organ of

And this reminds me that some Roman altars of peculiar sanctity bear the inscription, "Every Mass performed at this altar frees a soul from Purgatory" I have never been able to find out the charge for one of these services, but they should needs be expensive. There are several crosses in Rome, too, the kissing of which confers indulgences for varying terms. That in the centre of the Coliseum is worth a hundred days, and people may be seen kissing it from morning to night. It is curious that some of these crosses seem to acquire an arbitrary popularity, this very one among them. In another part of the Coliseum there is a cross upon a marble slab, with the inscription, "Who kisses this cross

shall be entitled to two hundred and forty days' indulgence "But I saw no one person kiss it, though, day after day, I sat in the arena, and saw scores upon scores of peasants pass it,

on their way to kiss the other

To single out details from the great dream of Roman Churches, would be the wildest occupation in the world But St Stefano Rotondo, a damp, mildewed vault of an old church in the outskirts of Rome, will always struggle uppermost in my mind, by reason of the hideous paintings with which its walls are covered These represent the martyrdoms of saints and early Christians, and such a panorama of horror and butchery no man could imagine in his sleep, though he were to eat a whole pig raw for sup-Grey-bearded men being boiled, fried, grilled, crimped, singed, eaten by wild beasts, worried by dogs, buried alive, torn asunder by horses, chopped up small with hatchets, women having their breasts torn with iron pincers, their tongues cut out, their ears screwed off, their jaws broken, their bodies stretched upon the rack, or skinned upon the stake, or crackled up and melted in the fire-these are among the mildest subjects So insisted on, and laboured at, besides, that every sufferer gives you the same occasion for wonder as poor old Duncan awoke, in Lady Macbeth, when she marvelled at his having so much blood in him

There is an upper chamber in the Mamertine Prison, over what is said to have been—and very possibly may have been—the dungeon of St Peter This chamber is now fitted up as an oratory, dedicated to that saint, and it lives, as a distinct and separate place, in my recollection, too It is very small and low-roofed, and the dread and gloom of the ponderous, obdurate old prison are on it, as if they had come up in a dark mist through the floor Hanging on the walls, among the clustered votive offerings, are objects, at once strangely in keeping and strangely at variance with the place—rusty daggers, knives, pistols, clubs, divers instruments of violence and murder, brought here, fresh from use, and hung up to propitiate offended Heaven as if the blood upon them would drain off in consecrated air, and have no voice to cry with It is all so silent and so close and tomb like, and the dungeons below are so black and stealthy, and

stagnant and naked, that this little dark spot becomes a dream within a dream, and in the vision of great churches which come rolling past me like a sea, it is a small wave by itself, that melts into no other wave, and does not flow on with the rest.

It is an awful thing to think of the enormous caverns that are entered from some Roman churches, and undermine the city Many churches have crypts and subterranean chapels of great size, which, in the ancient time, were baths, and secret chambers of temples, and what not, but I do not speak of them. Beneath the church of St Giovanni and St. Paolo there are the jaws of a terrific range of caverns, hewn out of the rock, and said to have another outlet underneath the Coliseum-tremendous darkness of vast extent, half buried in the earth and unexplorable, where the dull torches flashed by the attendants glimmer down long ranges of distant vaults branching to the right and left, like streets in a city of the dead, and show the cold damp stealing down the walls, drip-drop, drip-drop, to join the pools of water that lie here and there, and never saw, and never will see, one ray of the sun Some accounts make these the prisons of the wild beasts destined for the amphitheatre, some the prisons of the condemned gladiators, some, both But the legend most appalling to the fancy is, that in the upper range (for there are two stories of these caves) the Early Christians destined to be eaten at the Coliseum shows heard the wild beasts, hungry for them, roaring down below, until, upon the night and solitude of their captivity, there burst the sudden noon and life of the vast theatre crowded to the parapet, and of these, their dreaded neighbours, bounding in !

Below the church of San Sebastiano, two miles beyond the gate of San Sebastiano, on the Appian Way, is the entrance to the catacombs of Rome—quarries in the old time, but afterwards the hiding-places of the Christians These ghastly passages have been explored for twenty miles, and form a chain of labyrinths sixty miles in circumference

A gaunt Franciscan friar, with a wild bright eye, was our only guide down into this profound and dreadful place. The narrow ways and openings hither and thither, coupled with the dead and heavy air, soon blotted out, in all of us.

any recollection of the track by which we had come, and I could not help thinking, "Good Heaven, if, in a sudden fit of madness, he should dash the torches out, or if he should be seized with a fit, what would become of us?" On we wandered, among the martyrs' graves, passing great subterranean vaulted roads diverging in all directions, and choked up with heaps of stones that thieves and murderers may not take refuge there, and form a population under Rome even worse than that which lives between it and the Graves, graves, graves! Graves of men, of women, of their little children, who ran crying to the persecutors, "We are Christians! We are Christians!" that they might be murdered with their parents Graves with the palm of martyrdom roughly cut into their stone boundaries, and little niches, made to hold a vessel of the martyrs' blood. Graves of some who lived down here, for years together, ministering to the rest, and preaching truth, and hope, and comfort from the rude altars that bear witness to their fortitude at this hour More roomy graves, but far more terrible, where hundreds, being surprised, were hemmed in and walled up—buried before Death, and killed by slow starvation !

"The Triumphs of the Faith are not above ground in our splendid churches," said the friar, looking round upon us, as we stopped to rest in one of the low passages, with bones and dust surrounding us on every side "They are here! among the Martyrs' Graves!" He was a gentle, earnest man, and said it from his heart, but when I thought how Christian men have dealt with one another—how, perverting our most merciful religion, they have hunted down and tortured, burnt and beheaded, strangled, slaughtered, and oppressed each other—I pictured to myself an agony surpassing any that this Dust had suffered with the breath of life yet lingering in it, and how these great and constant hearts would have been shaken—how they would have quailed and drooped—if a foreknowledge of the deeds that professing Christians would commit in the Great Name for which they died, could have rent them with its own untiterable anguish, on the cruel wheel, and bitter cross, and in the fearful fire.

Such are the spots and patches in my dream of churches that remain apart, and keep their separate identity I have a fainter recollection, sometimes of the relics, of the fragment of the pillar of the Temple that was rent in twain, of the portion of the table that was spread for the Last Supper. of the well at which the woman of Samaria gave water to Our Saviour, of two columns from the house of Pontius Pilate, of the stone to which the Sacred hands were bound when the scourging was performed, of the gridiron of Saint Lawrence, and the stone below it, marked with the frying of his fat and blood,—these set a shadowy mark on some cathedrals, as an old story or a fable might, and stop them for an instant, as they flit before me The rest is a vast wilderness of consecrated buildings of all shapes and fancies, blending one with another, of battered pillars of old Pagan temples, dug up from the ground, and forced, like giant captives, to support the roofs of Christian churches, of pictures, bad, and wonderful, and impious, and ridiculous, of kneeling people, curling incense, tinkling bells, and sometimes (but not often) of a swelling organ, of Madonne, with their breasts stuck full of swords, arranged in a half-circle like a modern fan, of actual skeletons of dead saints, hideously attired in gaudy satins, silks, and velvets trimmed with gold, their withered crust of skull adorned with precious jewels or with chaplets of crushed flowers, sometimes, of people gathered round the pulpit, and a monk within it stretching out the crucifix and preaching fiercely, the sun just streaming down through some high window on the sail-cloth stretched above him and across the church, to keep his high-pitched voice from being lost among the echoes of the roof Then my tired memory comes out upon a flight of steps, where knots of people are asleep, or basking in the light, and strolls away, among the rags, and smells, and palaces, and hovels, of an old Italian street

On one Saturday morning (the eighth of March) a man was beheaded here. Nine or ten months before, he had waylaid a Bavarian countess, travelling as a pilgrim to Rome—alone and on foot, of course—and performing, it is said, that act of piety for the fourth time. He saw her

change a piece of gold at Viterbo, where he lived, followed her, bore her company on her journey for some forty miles or more, on the treacherous pretext of protecting her, attacked her, in the fulfilment of his unrelenting purpose, on the Campagna, within a very short distance of Rome, near to what is called (but what is not) the Tomb of Nero, robbed her, and beat her to death with her own pilgrim's staff. He was newly married, and gave some of her apparel to his wife, saying that he had bought it at a fair. She, however, who had seen the pilgrim countess passing through their town, recognized some trifle as having belonged to her. Her husband then told her what he had done. She, in confession, told a priest, and the man was taken, within four days after the commission of the murder.

There are no fixed times for the administration of justice, or its execution, in this unaccountable country; and he had been in prison ever since. On the Friday, as he was dining with the other prisoners, they came and told him he was to be beheaded next morning, and took him away. It is very unusual to execute in Lent, but his crime being a very bad one, it was deemed advisable to make an example of him at that time, when great numbers of pilgrims were coming, towards Rome, from all parts, for the Holy Week. I heard of this on the Friday evening, and saw the bills up at the churches, calling on the people to pray for the criminal's

soul So I determined to go and see him executed

The beheading was appointed for fourteen and a half o'clock, Roman time, or a quarter before nine in the foremoon. I had two friends with me, and as we did not know but that the crowd might be very great, we were on the spot by half-past seven. The place of execution was near the church of San Giovanni decolláto (a doubtful compliment to Saint John the Baptist), in one of the impassable back streets without any footway, of which a great part of Rome is composed—a street of rotten houses, which do not seem to belong to anybody, and do not seem to have ever been inhabited, and certainly were never built on any plan, or for any particular purpose, and have no window-sashes, and are a little like deserted breweries, and might be warehouses but for having nothing in them. Opposite to one of these, a

white house, the scaffold was built. An untidy, unpainted, uncouth, crazy-looking thing, of course—some seven feet high, perhaps—with a tall, gallows-shaped frame rising above it, in which was the knife, charged with a ponderous mass of iron, all ready to descend, and glittering brightly in the morning sun, whenever it looked out, now and then, from behind a cloud

There were not many people lingering about, and these were kept at a considerable distance from the scaffold by parties of the Pope's dragoons. Two or three hundred footsoldiers were under arms, standing at ease in clusters here and there, and the officers were walking up and down in two and threes, chatting together, and smoking cigars

At the end of the street was an open space, where there would be a dust-heap, and piles of broken crockery, and mounds of vegetable refuse, but for such things being thrown anywhere and everywhere in Rome, and favouring no particular sort of locality. We got into a kind of wash-house, belonging to a dwelling-house on this spot, and standing there in an old cart, and on a heap of cart-wheels piled against the wall, looked through a large grated window at the scaffold, and straight down the street beyond it, until, in consequence of its turning off abruptly to the left, our perspective was brought to a sudden termination, and had a corpulent officer, in a cocked hat, for its crowning feature

Nine o'clock struck, and ten o'clock struck, and nothing happened. All the bells of all the churches rang as usual A little parliament of dogs assembled in the open space, and chased each other in and out among the soldiers Fiercelooking Romans of the lowest class, in blue cloaks, russet cloaks, and rags uncloaked, came and went, and talked together if Women and children fluttered on the skirts of the scanty crowd One large muddy spot was left quite bare, like a bald place on a man's head A cigar-merchant, with an earthen pot of charcoal ashes in one hand, went up and down crying his wares A pastry-merchant divided his attention between the scaffold and his customers Boys tried to climbtup walls, and tumbled down again Priests and monks elbowed a passage for themselves among the people, and stood on tiptoe for a sight of the knife, then went away.

Artists, in inconceivable hats of the middle ages, and beard (thank Heaven!) of no age at all, flashed picturesque scowlabout them from their stations in the throng. One gentle man (connected with the fine arts, I presume) went up and down in a pair of Hessian boots, with a red beard hanging down on his breast, and his long and bright red hair plaited into two tails, one on either side of his head, which fell over his shoulders in front of him, very nearly to his waist, and were carefully entwined and braided!

Eleven o'clock struck, and still nothing happened A rumour got about, among the crowd, that the criminal would not confess, in which case, the priests would keep him until the Ave Maria (sunset), for it is their merciful custom never finally to turn the crucifix away from a man at that pass, as one refusing to be shriven, and consequently a sinner abandoned of the Saviour, until then People began to drop off The officers shrugged their shoulders and looked doubtful The dragoons, who came riding up below our window, every now and then, to order an unlucky hackney-coach or cart away, as soon as it had comfortably established itself, and was covered with exulting people (but never before), became imperious and quick-tempered The bald place hadn't a straggling hair upon it, and the corpulent officer, crowning the perspective, took a world of snuff

Suddenly there was a noise of trumpets "Attention 1" was among the foot-soldiers instantly They were marched up to the scaffold and formed round it The dragoons galloped to their nearer stations too The guillotine became the centre of a wood of bristling bayonets and shining sabres. The people closed round nearer, on the flank of the soldiery A long, straggling stream of men and boys, who had accompanied the procession from the prison, came pouring into the open space. The bald spot was scarcely distinguishable from the rest. The cigar and pastry merchants resigned all thoughts of business for the moment, and abandoning themselves wholly to pleasure, got good situations in the crowd. The perspective ended now in a troop of dragoons. And the corpulent officer, sword in hand, looked hard at a church close to him, which he could see, but we, the crowd, could not

After a short delay, some monks were seen approaching to

the scaffold from this church, and above their heads, coming on slowly and gloomily, the effigy of Christ upon the cross, canopied with black. This was carried round the foot of the scaffold, to the front, and turned towards the criminal, that he might see it to the last. It was hardly in its place when he appeared on the platform, barefooted, his hands bound, and with the collar and neck of his shirt cut away almost to the shoulder. A young man—six-and-twenty—vigorously made, and well-shaped, face pale, small dark moustache, and dark brown hair

He had refused to confess, it seemed, without first having his wife brought to see him, and they had sent an escort

for her, which had occasioned the delay

He immediately kneeled down, below the knife His neck fitting into a hole, made for the purpose, in a cross plank, was shut down by another plank above, exactly like the pillory Immediately below him was a leathern bag And into it his head rolled instantly

The executioner was holding it by the hair, and walking with it round the scaffold, showing it to the people, before one quite knew that the knife had fallen heavily, and with a

rattling sound

When it had travelled round the four sides of the scaffold, it was set upon a pole in front—a little patch of black and white, for the long street to stare at, and the flies to settle on. The eyes were turned upward, as if he had avoided the sight of the leathern bag, and looked to the crucifix. Every tinge and hue of life had left it in that instant. It was dull,

cold, livid, wax The body also

There was a great deal of blood. When we left the window, and went close up to the scaffold, it was very dirty, one of the two men who were throwing water over it, turning to help the other to lift the body into a shell, picked his way as through mire. A strange appearance was the apparent annihilation of the neck. The head was taken off so close, that it seemed as if the knife had narrowly escaped crushing the jaw, or shaving off the ear, and the body looked as if there was nothing left above the shoulder.

Nobody cared, or was at all affected There was no

manifestation of disgust, or pity, or indignation, or sorrow My empty pockets were tried, several times, in the crowd im mediately below the scaffold, as the corpse was being put into its coffin. It was an ugly, filthy, careless, sickening spectacle, meaning nothing but butchery, beyond the momentary in terest, to the one wretched actor. Yes! Such a sight has one meaning and one warning. Let me not forget it. The speculators in the lottery station themselves at favourable points for counting the gouts of blood that spirt out, here or there, and buy that number. It is pretty sure to have a run upon it.

The body was carted away in due time, the knife cleansed, the scaffold taken down, and all the hideous apparatus removed. The executioner, an outlaw ex officio (what a satire on the Punishment!), who dare not, for his life, cross the Bridge of St. Angelo but to do his work, retreated to his

lair, and the show was over

At the head of the collections in the palaces of Rome, the Vatican, of course, with its treasures of art, its enormous galleries, and staircases, and suites upon suites of immense chambers, ranks highest and stands foremost. Many most noble statues and wonderful pictures are there, nor is it heresy to say that there is a considerable amount of rubbish there too. When any old piece of sculpture, dug out of the ground, finds a place in a gallery because it is old, and without any reference to its intrinsic merits, and finds admirers by the hundred because it is there, and for no other reason on earth, there will be no lack of objects, very indifferent in the plain eyesight of any one who employs so vulgar a property, when he may wear the spectacles of Cant for less than nothing, and establish himself as a man of taste for the mere trouble of putting them on

I unreservedly confess, for myself, that I cannot leave my natural perception of what is natural and true at a palace door, in Italy or elsewhere, as I should leave my shoes if I were travelling in the East I cannot forget that there are certain expressions of face, natural to certain passions, and as unchangeable in their nature as the gait of a lion, or the flight of an eagle I cannot dismiss from my certain

knowledge such commonplace facts as the ordinary proportions of men's arms, and legs, and heads, and when I meet with performances that do violence to these experiences and recollections, no matter where they may be, I cannot honestly admirê them, and think it best to say so, in spite of high critical advice that we should sometimes feign an

admiration, though we have it not

Therefore, I freely acknowledge that when I see a jolly young Waterman representing a cherubim, or a Barclay and Perkins's Drayman depicted as an Evangelist, I see nothing to commend or admire in the performance, however great its reputed Painter Neither am I partial to libellous Angels, who play on fiddles and bassoons, for the edification of sprawling monks apparently in liquor. Nor to those Monsieur Tonsons of galleries, Saint Francis and Saint Sebastian, both of whom, I submit, should have very uncommon and rare merits, as works of art, to justify their compound multiplication by Italian Painters.

It seems to me, too, that the indiscriminate and determined raptures in which some critics indulge, are incompatible with the true appreciation of the really great and transcendent I cannot imagine, for example, how the resolute champion of undeserving pictures can soar to the amazing beauty of Titian's great picture of the Assumption of the Virgin at Venice, or how the man who is truly affected by the sublimity of that exquisite production, or who is truly sensible of the beauty of Tintoretto's great picture of the Assembly of the Blessed in the same place, can discern in Michael Angelo's Last Judgment, in the Sistine Chapel, any general idea or one pervading thought in harmony with the stupendous subject He who will contemplate Raphael's masterpiece, the Transfiguration, and will go away into another chamber of that same Vatican, and contemplate another design of Raphael, representing (in incredible caricature) the miraculous stopping of a great fire by Leo the Fourth—and who will say that he admires them both, as works of extraordinary genius-must, as I think, be wanting in his powers of perception in one of the two instances, and, probably, in the high and lofty one

It is easy to suggest a doubt, but I have a great doubt

whether sometimes the rules of art are not too strictly observed, and whether it is quite well or agreeable that we should know beforehand where this figure will be turning round, and where that figure will be lying down, and where there will be drapery in folds, and so forth. When I observe heads inferior to the subject in pictures of merit in Italian galleries, I do not attach that reproach to the Painter, for I have a suspicion that these great men, who were, of necessity, very much in the hands of monks and priests, painted monks and priests a great deal too often. I frequently see, in pictures of real power, heads quite below the story and the painter, and I invariably observe that those heads are of the Convent stamp, and have their counterparts among the Convent inmates of this hour, so I have settled with myself that, in such cases, the lameness was not with the painter, but with the vanity and ignorance of certain of his employers, who would be apostles—on canvas, at all events

The exquisite grace and beauty of Canova's statues, the wonderful gravity and repose of many of the ancient works in sculpture, both in the Capitol and the Vatican; and the strength and fire of many others, are, in their different ways, beyond all reach of words They are especially impressive and delightful, after the works of Bernini and his disciples, in which the churches of Rome, from St Peter's downward, abound, and which are, I verily believe, the most detestable class of productions in the wide world I would infinitely rather (as mere works of art) look upon the three deities of the Past, the Present, and the Future, in the Chinese Collection, than upon the best of these breezy maniacs, whose every fold of drapery is blown inside out, whose smallest vein or artery is as big as an ordinary forefinger, whose hair is like a nest of lively snakes, and whose attitudes put all other extravagance to shame Insomuch that I do honestly believe there can be no place in the world where such intolerable abortions, begotten of the sculptor's chisel, are to be found in such profusion as in Rome

There is a fine collection of Egyptian antiquities in the Vatican, and the ceilings of the rooms in which they are arranged are painted to represent a starlight sky in the Desert It may seem an odd idea, but it is very effective.

The grim, half-human monsters from the temples look more grim and monstrous underneath the deep dark blue, it sheds a strange, uncertain, gloomy air on everything—a mystery adapted to the objects, and you leave them, as you find them, shrouded in a solemn night

In the private palaces pictures are seen to the best advantage. There are seldom so many in one place that the attention need become distracted or the eye confused. You see them very leisurely, and are rarely interrupted by a crowd of people. There are portraits innumerable, by Titian, and Rembrandt, and Vandyke, heads by Guido, and Domenichino, and Carlo Dolci, various subjects by Correggio, and Murillo, and Raphael, and Salvator Rosa, and Spagnoletto—many of which it would be difficult, indeed, to praise too highly or to praise enough, such is their tenderness and

grace, their noble elevation, purity, and beauty

The portrait of Beatrice di Cenci, in the Palazzo Beiberini. is a picture almost impossible to be forgotten. Through the transcendent sweetness and beauty of the face there is a something shining out that haunts me I see it now, as I see this paper or my pen The head is loosely draped in white, the light hair falling down below the linen folds. She has turned suddenly towards you, and there is an expression in the eyes-although they are very tender and gentle-as if the wildness of a momentary terror or distraction had been struggled with and overcome that instant, and nothing but a celestial hope, and a beautiful sorrow, and a desolate earthly helplessness remained Some stories say that Guido painted it the night before her execution, some other stories, that he painted it from memory, after having seen her on her way to I am willing to believe that, as you see her on his canvas, so she turned towards him in the crowd, from the first sight of the axe, and stamped upon his mind a look which he has stamped on mine as though I had stood beside him in the concourse The guilty palace of the Cenciblighting a whole quarter of the town, as it stands withering away by grains—had that face, to my fancy, in its dismal porch, and at its black blind windows, and flitting up and down its dreary stairs, and growing out of the darkness of its ghostly galleries The History is written in the Paintingwritten, in the dying girl's face, by Nature's own hand. And oh! how in that one touch she puts to flight (instead of making kin) the puny world that claim to be related to her,

in right of poor conventional forgeries!

I saw in the Palazzo Spada the statue of Pompey—the statue at whose base Cæsar fell A stern, tremendous figure! I imagined one of greater finish, of the last refinement, full of delicate touches, losing its distinctness in the giddy eyes of one whose blood was ebbing before it, and settling into some such rigid majesty as this, as Death came creeping over

the upturned face

The excursions in the neighbourhood of Rome are charming, and would be full of interest were it only for the changing views they afford of the wild Campagna But every inch of ground in every direction is rich in associations and in natural beauties There is Albano, with its lovely lake and wooded shore, and with its wine, that certainly has not improved since the days of Horace, and in these times hardly justifies his panegyric There is squalid Tivoli, with the river Anio, diverted from its course, and plunging down, headlong, some eighty feet in search of it, with its picturesque Temple of the Sibyl, perched high on a crag, its minor waterfalls glancing and sparkling in the sun, and one good cavern yawning darkly, where the river takes a fearful plunge and shoots on, low down under beetling rocks There, too, is the Villa d'Este, deserted and decaying among groves of melancholy pine and cypress trees, where it seems to lie in Then there is Frascati, and, on the steep above it, the ruins of Tusculum, where Cicero lived, and wrote, and adorned his favourite house (some fragments of it may yet be seen there), and where Cato was born We saw its ruined amphitheatre on a grey, dull day, when a shrill March wind was blowing, and when the scattered stones of the old city' lay strewn about the lonely eminence, as desolate and dead as the ashes of a long extinguished fire

One day we walked out, a little party of three, to Albano, fourteen miles distant, possessed by a great desire to go there by the ancient Appian Way, long since ruined and overgrown. We started at half-past seven in the morning, and within an hour or so were out upon the open Campagna.

For twelve miles we went climbing on, over an unbroken succession of mounds, and heaps, and hills of ruin Tombs and temples overthrown and prostrate, small fragments of columns, friezes, pediments, great blocks of granite and marble, mouldering arches, grass-grown and decayed, ruin enough to build a spacious city from, lay strewn about us Sometimes loose walls, built up from these fragments by the shepherds, came across our path, sometimes a ditch between two mounds of broken stones obstructed our progress. sometimes the fragments themselves, rolling from beneath our feet, made it a toilsome matter to advance but it was always ruin Now we tracked a piece of the old road above the ground, now traced it underneath a grassy covering, as if that were its grave but all the way was ruin In the distance ruined aqueducts went stalking on their giant course along the plain, and every breath of wind that swept towards us stirred early flowers and grasses springing up spontaneously on miles of ruin The unseen larks above us, who alone disturbed the awful silence, had their nests in ruin, and the fierce herdsmen, clad in sheepskins, who now and then scowled out upon us from their sleeping nooks, were housed in ruin The aspect of the desolate Campagna in one direction, where it was most level, reminded me of an American prairie, but what is the solitude of a region where men have never dwelt, to that of a desert where a mighty race have left their footprints in the earth from which they have vanished, where the resting-places of their dead have fallen like their dead, and the broken hour-glass of Time is but a heap of idle dust! Returning by the road at sunset, and looking, from the distance, on the course we had taken in the morning, I almost felt (as I had felt when I first saw it at that hour) as if the sun would never rise again, but looked its last that night upon a ruined world

To come again on Rome by moonlight, after such an expedition, is a fitting close to such a day. The narrow streets, devoid of footways, and choked in every obscure corner by heaps of dunghill rubbish, contrast so strongly, in their cramped dimensions, and their filth and darkness, with the broad square before some haughty church, in the centre of which a hieroglyphic-covered obelisk, brought from Egypt

in the days of the Emperors, looks strangely on the foreign scene about it, or perhaps an ancient pillar, with its honoured statue overthrown, supports a Christian saint-Marcus Aurelius giving place to Paul and Trajan to St Peter Then there are the ponderous buildings reared from the spoliation of the Coliseum, shutting out the moon like mountains, while here and there are broken arches and rent walls, through which it gushes freely, as the life comes pouring from a wound little town of miserable houses, walled and shut in by barred gates, is the quarter where the Jews are locked up nightly when the clock strikes eight—a miserable place, densely populated, and reeking with bad odours, but where the people are industrious and money-getting. In the daytime, as you make your way along the narrow streets, you see them all at work-upon the pavement oftener than in their dark and frowzy shops-furbishing old clothes, and driving bargains

Crossing from these patches of thick darkness out into the moon once more, the fountain of Trevi, welling from a hundred jets, and rolling over mimic rocks, is silvery to the eye and ear In the narrow little throat of street beyond, a booth, dressed out with flaring lamps and boughs of trees, attracts a group of sulky Romans round its smoking coppers of hot broth and cauliflower stew, its trays of fried fish, and its flasks of wine As you rattle round the sharply-twisting corner, a lumbering sound is heard. The coachman stops abruptly, and uncovers, as a van comes slowly by, preceded by a man who bears a large cross, by a torchbearer, and a priest, the latter chanting as he goes It is the Dead Cart, with the bodies of the poor, on their way to burial in the Sacred Field outside the walls, where they will be thrown into the pit that will be covered with a stone to-night, and sealed up for a year

But whether, in this ride, you pass by obelisks or columns, ancient temples, theatres, houses, porticoes, or forums, it is strange to see how every fragment, whenever it is possible, has been blended into some modern structure, and made to serve some modern purpose—a wall, a dwelling-place, a granary, a stable—some use for which it never was designed, and associated with which it cannot otherwise than lamely

assort. It is stranger still to see how many ruins of the old mythology-how many fragments of obsolete legend and observance—have been incorporated into the worship of Christian altars here, and how, in numberless respects, the false faith and the true are fused into a monstrous union

From one part of the city, looking out beyond the walls, a squat and stunted pyramid (the burial-place of Caius Cestius) makes an opaque triangle in the moonlight But to an English traveller it serves to mark the grave of Shelley too, whose ashes lie beneath a little garden near it Nearer still, almost within its shadow, lie the bones of Keats, "whose name is writ in water," that shines brightly in the landscape of a calm Italian night

The Holy Week in Rome is supposed to offer great attractions to all visitors, but, saving for the sights of Easter Sunday, I would counsel those who go to Rome for its own interest, to avoid it at that time. The ceremonies, in general, are of the most tedious and wearisome kind, the heat and crowd at every one of them painfully oppressive, the noise, hubbub, and confusion quite distracting We abandoned the pursuit of these shows very early in the proceedings, and betook ourselves to the Ruins again But we plunged into the crowd for a share of the best of the sights, and what we saw I will describe to you

At the Sistine Chapel, on the Wednesday, we saw very little, for by the time we reached it (though we were early), the besieging crowd had filled it to the door, and overflowed into the adjoining hall, where they were struggling, and squeezing, and mutually expostulating, and making great rushes every time a lady was brought out faint, as if at least fifty people could be accommodated in her vacant standing-Hanging in the doorway of the chapel was a heavy curtain, and this curtain some twenty people nearest to it, in their anxiety to hear the chanting of the Miserere, were continually plucking at, in opposition to each other, that it might not fall down and stifle the sound of the voices quence was, that it occasioned the most extraordinary confusion, and seemed to wind itself about the unwary like a serpent Now a lady was wrapped up in it, and couldn't be

unwound Now the voice of a stifling gentleman was heard inside it, beseeching to be let out. Now two muffled arms, no man could say of which sex, struggled in it as in a sack. Now it was carried by a rush bodily overhead into the chapel, like an awning. Now it came out the other way, and blinded one of the Pope's Swiss Guard, who had arrived that moment to set things to rights

Being seated at a little distance, among two or three of the Pope's gentlemen, who were very weary and counting the minutes—as perhaps His Holiness was too—we had better opportunities of observing this eccentric entertainment than of hearing the Miserere Sometimes there was a swell of mournful voices that sounded very pathetic and sad, and died away into a low strain again, but that was all we heard

At another time there was the Exhibition of the Relics in Saint Peter's, which took place at between six and seven o'clock in the evening, and was striking, from the cathedral being dark and gloomy, and having a great many people in The place into which the relics were brought, one by one, by a party of three priests, was a high balcony near the chief altar This was the only lighted part of the church There are always a hundred and twelve lamps burning near the altar, and there were two tall tapers besides, near the black statue of St Peter, but these were nothing in such an immense edifice The gloom, and the general upturning of faces to the balcony, and the prostration of true believers on the pavement, as shining objects, like pictures or lookingglasses, were brought out and shown, had something effective in it, despite the very preposterous manner in which they were held up for the general edification, and the great elevation at which they were displayed, which one would think rather calculated to diminish the comfort derivable from a full conviction of their being genuine

On the Thursday, we went to see the Pope convey the Sacrament from the Sistine Chapel, to deposit it in the Capella Paolina, another chapel in the Vatican—a ceremony emblematical of the entombment of the Saviour before His resurrection. We waited in a great gallery with a great crowd of people (three-fourths of them English) for an hour or so, while they were chanting the Miserere, in the Sistine Chapel

again Both chapels opened out of the gallery, and the general attention was concentrated on the occasional opening and shutting of the door of the one for which the Pope was ultimately bound None of these openings disclosed anything more tremendous than a man on a ladder, lighting a great quantity of candles, but at each and every opening there was a terrific rush made at this ladder and this man. something like (I should think) a charge of the heavy British cavalry at Waterloo The man was never brought down, however, nor the ladder, for it performed the strangest antics in the world among the crowd-where it was carried by the man, when the candles were all lighted, and finally it was stuck up against the gallery wall, in a very disorderly manner, just before the opening of the other chapel, and the commencement of a new chant, announced the approach of His Holiness At this crisis, the soldiers of the Guard, who had been poking the crowd into all sorts of shapes, formed down the gallery, and the procession came up, between the two lines they made

There were a few choristers, and then a great many priests, walking two and two, and carrying—the good-looking priests at least—their lighted tapers so as to throw the light with a good effect upon their faces, for the room was darkened Those who were not handsome, or who had not long beards, carried their tapers anyhow, and abandoned themselves to spiritual contemplation Meanwhile, the chanting was very monotonous and dreary The procession passed on, slowly, into the chapel, and the drone of voices went on, and came on, with it, until the Pope himself appeared, walking under a white satin canopy, and bearing the covered Sacrament in both hands, cardinals and canons clustered round him, making a brilliant show The soldiers of the Guard knelt down as he passed, all the bystanders bowed, and so he passed on into the chapel, the white satin canopy being removed from over him at the door, and a white satin parasol hoisted over his poor old head in place of it A few more couples brought up the rear, and passed into the chapel also Then the chapel door was shut, and it was all over, and everybody hurried off headlong, as for life or death, to see something else and say it wasn't worth the trouble.

I think the most popular and most crowded sight (excepting those of Easter Sunday and Monday, which are open to all classes of people) was the Pope washing the feet of thirteen men, representing the twelve apostles and Judas The place in which this pious office is performed is one of the chapels of St Peter's, which is gaily decorated for the occasion, the thirteen sitting, "all of a row," on a very high bench, and looking particularly uncomfortable. with the eyes of Heaven knows how many English, French, Americans, Swiss, Germans, Russians, Swedes, Norwegians, and other foreigners, nailed to their faces all the time They are robed in white, and on their heads they wear a stiff white cap, like a large English porter-pot without a handle Each carries in his hand a nosegay, of the size of a fine cauliflower, and two of them, on this occasion, wore spectacles, which, remembering the characters they sustained, I thought a droll appendage to the costume There was a great eye to character St John was represented by a good-looking young man, St Peter, by a grave-looking old gentleman, with a flowing brown beard, and Judas Iscariot by such an enormous hypocrite (I could not make out, though, whether the expression of his face was real or assumed), that if he had acted the part to the death, and had gone away and hanged himself, he would have left nothing to be desired

As the two large boxes, appropriated to ladies at this sight, were full to the throat, and getting near was hopeless, we posted off, along with a great crowd, to be in time at the Table, where the Pope, in person, waits on these thirteen, and after a prodigious struggle at the Vatican staircase, and several personal conflicts with the Swiss Guard, the whole crowd swept into the room It was a long gallery hung with drapery of white and red, with another great box for ladies (who are obliged to dress in black at these ceremonies, and to wear black veils), a royal box for the King of Naples and his party, and the table itself, which, set out like a ball supper, and ornamented with golden figures of the real apostles, was arranged on an elevated platform on one side of the gallery The counterfeit apostles' knives and forks were laid out on that side of the table which was nearest to the wall, so that they might be stared at again, without let or hindrance.

The body of the room was full of male strangers, the crowd immense, the heat very great, and the pressure sometimes frightful. It was at its height when the stream came pouring in from the feet-washing, and then there were such shrieks and outcries, that a party of Piedmontese dragoons went to the rescue of the Swiss Guard, and helped them to calm the tumult

The ladies were particularly ferocious in their struggles for places. One lady of my acquaintance was seized round the waist, in the ladies' box, by a strong matron, and hoisted out of her place, and there was another lady (in a back row in the same box) who improved her position by sticking a large pin into the ladies before her

The gentlemen about me were remarkably anxious to see what was on the table, and one Englishman seemed to have embarked the whole energy of his nature in the determination to discover whether there was any mustard "By Jupiter, there's vinegar!" I heard him say to his friend, after he had stood on tiptoe an immense time, and had been crushed and beaten on all sides "And there's oil! I saw them distinctly, in cruets! Can any gentleman in front there see mustard on the table? Sir, will you oblige me? Do you see a mustard-pot?"

The apostles and Judas appearing on the platform, after much expectation, were marshalled in line in front of the table, with Peter at the top, and a good long stare was taken at them by the company, while twelve of them took a long smell at their nosegays, and Judas-moving his lips very obtrusively - engaged in inward prayer Then the Pope, clad in a scarlet robe, and wearing on his head a skull-cap of white satin, appeared in the midst of a crowd of Cardinals and other dignitaries, and took in his hand a little golden ewer, from which he poured a little water over one of Peter's hands, while one attendant held a golden basin, a second, a fine cloth, a third, Peter's nosegay, which was taken from him during the operation This His Holiness performed, with considerable expedition, on every man in the line (Judas I observed to be particularly overcome by his condescension), and then the whole thirteen sat down to dinner. Grace said by the Pope Peter in the chair.

There was white wine, and red wine, and the dinner looked very good The courses appeared in portions, one for each apostle, and these being presented to the Pope, by Cardinals upon their knees, were by him handed to the thirteen. The manner in which Judas grew more whitelivered over his victuals, and languished, with his head on one side, as if he had no appetite, defies all description Peter was a good, sound, old man, and went in, as the saying is, "to win," eating everything that was given him (he got the best, being first in the row), and saying nothing to anybody The dishes appeared to be chiefly composed of fish and vegetables The Pope helped the thirteen to wine also, and, during the whole dinner, somebody read something aloud, out of a large Book—the Bible, I presume—which nobody could hear, and to which nobody paid the least attention The Cardinals, and other attendants, smiled to each other from time to time, as if the thing were a great farce, and if they thought so, there is little doubt they were perfectly right His Holiness did what he had to do, as a sensible man gets through a troublesome ceremony, and seemed very glad when it was all over

The Pilgrims' Suppers—where lords and ladies waited on the Pilgrims, in token of humility, and dried their feet when they had been well washed by deputy—were very attractive But of all the many spectacles of dangerous reliance on outward observances, in themselves mere empty forms, none struck me half so much as the Scala Santa, or Holy Staircase, which I saw several times, but to the greatest advan-

tage, or disadvantage, on Good Friday

This holy staircase is composed of eight-and-twenty steps, said to have belonged to Pontius Pilate's house, and to be the identical stairs on which our Saviour trod in coming down from the judgment-seat Pilgrims ascend it only on their knees. It is steep, and, at the summit, is a chapel, reported to be full of relics, into which they peep through some iron bars, and then come down again, by one of two side staircases, which are not sacred, and may be walked on

On Good Friday, there were, on a moderate computation, a hundred people slowly shuffling up these stairs on their knees at one time, while others, who were going up, or had

come down—and a few who had done both, and were going up again for the second time—stood loitering in the porch below, where an old gentleman in a sort of watch-box rattled a tin canister, with a slit in the top, incessantly, to remind them that he took the money. The majority were country people, male and female. There were four or five Jesuit priests, however, and some half-dozen well dressed women. A whole school of boys, twenty at least, were about half-way up, evidently enjoying it very much. They were all wedged together pretty closely, but the rest of the company gave the boys as wide a berth as possible, in consequence of their betraying some recklessness in the management of their boots.

I never, in my life, saw anything at once so ridiculous and so unpleasant as this sight—ridiculous in the absurd incidents inseparable from it, and unpleasant in its senseless and unmeaning degradation. There are two steps to begin with, and then a rather broad landing. The more rigid climbers went along this landing on their knees, as well as up the stairs, and the figures they cut, in their shuffling progress over the level surface, no description can paint. Then, to see them watch their opportunity from the porch, and cut in where there was a place next the wall! And to see one man with an umbrella (brought on purpose, for it was a fine day) hoisting himself, unlawfully, from stair to stair! And to observe a demure lady of fifty-five or so, looking back, every now and then, to assure herself that her legs were properly disposed!

There were such odd differences in the speed of different people, too Some got on as if they were doing a match against time, others stopped to say a prayer on every step. This man touched every stair with his forehead, and kissed it, that man scratched his head all the way. The boys got on brilliantly, and were up and down again before the old lady had accomplished her half-dozen stairs. But most of the penitents came down very sprightly and fresh, as having done a real good substantial deed which it would take a good deal of sin to counterbalance, and the old gentleman in the watch-box was down upon them with his canister

while they were in this humour, I promise you.

As if such a progress were not in its nature inevitably droll enough, there lay, on the top of the stairs, a wooden figure on a crucifix, resting on a sort of great iron saucer, so rickety and unsteady that whenever an enthusiastic person kissed the figure with more than usual devotion, or threw a coin into the saucer with more than common readiness (for it served in this respect as a second or supplementary canister), it gave a great leap and rattle, and nearly shook the attendant lamp out, horribly frightening the people further down, and throwing the guilty party into unspeakable embarrassment.

On Easter Sunday, as well as on the preceding Thursday, the Pope bestows his benediction on the people from the balcony in front of St Peter's This Easter Sunday was a day so bright and blue, so cloudless, balmy, wonderfully bright, that all the previous bad weather vanished from the recollection in a moment I had seen the Thursday's benediction dropping damply on some hundreds of umbrellas, but there was not a sparkle then, in all the hundred fountains of Rome—such fountains as they are '—and on this Sunday morning they were running diamonds The miles of miserable streets through which we drove (compelled to a certain course by the Pope's dragoons—the Roman police on such occasions) were so full of colour, that nothing in them was capable of wearing a faded aspect. The common people came out in their gayest dresses, the richer people in their smartest vehicles, Cardinals rattled to the church of the Poor Fishermen in their state carriages, shabby magnificence flaunted its threadbare liveries and tarnished cocked hats in the sun, and every coach in Rome was put in requisition for the Great Piazza of St Peter's

One hundred and fifty thousand people were there at least! Yet there was ample room. How many carriages were there, I don't know, yet there was room for them too, and to spare. The great steps of the church were densely crowded. There were many of the Contadini, from Albano (who delight in red), in that part of the square, and the mingling of bright colours in the crowd was beautiful. Below the steps the troops were ranged. In the magnificent proportions of the place they looked like a bed of flowers.

Sulky Romans, lively peasants from the neighbouring country, groups of pilgrims from distant parts of Italy, sight-seeing foreigners of all nations, made a murmur in the clear air, like so many insects, and high above them all, plashing and bubbling, and making rainbow colours in the light, the two delicious fountains welled and tumbled bountifully

A kind of bright carpet was hung over the front of the balcony, and the sides of the great window were bedecked with crimson drapery An awning was stretched, too, over the top, to screen the old man from the hot rays of the sun. As noon approached all eyes were turned up to this window In due time the chair was seen approaching to the front, with the gigantic fans of peacocks' feathers close behind The doll within it (for the balcony is very high) then rose up and stretched out its tiny arms, while all the male spectators in the square uncovered, and some, but not by any means the greater part, kneeled down The guns upon the ramparts of the Castle of St Angelo proclaimed, next moment, that the benediction was given, drums beat, trumpets sounded, arms clashed, and the great mass below, suddenly breaking into smaller heaps, and scattering here and there in rills, was stirred like particoloured sand

What a bright noon it was as we rode away! The Tiber was no longer yellow, but blue There was a blush on the old bridges, that made them fresh and hale again Pantheon, with its majestic front all seamed and furrowed like an old face, had summer light upon its battered walls Every squalid and desolate hut in the Eternal City (bear witness, every grim old palace, to the filth and misery of the pleberan neighbour that elbows it, as certainly as Time has laid its grip on its patrician head!) was fresh and new with some ray of the sun. The very prison in the crowded street, a whirl of carriages and people, had some stray sense of the day dropping through its chinks and crevices, and dismal prisoners, who could not wind their faces round the barricading of the blocked-up windows, stretched out their hands, and clinging to the rusty bars turned them towards the overflowing street, as if it were a cheerful fire, and could be shared in that way

But when the night came on, without a cloud to dim the

full moon, what a sight it was to see the Great Square full once more, and the whole church, from the cross to the ground, lighted with innumerable lanterns, tracing out the architecture, and winking and shining all round the colon-nade of the piazza! And what a sense of exultation, joy, delight it was when the great bell struck half-past seven—on the instant—to behold one bright red mass of fire soar gallantly from the top of the cupola to the extremest summit of the cross, and the moment it leaped into its place, become the signal of a bursting out of countless lights, as great, and red, and blazing as itself, from every part of the gigantic church, so that every cornice, capital, and smallest ornament of stone expressed itself in fire, and the black solid groundwork of the enormous dome seemed to grow transparent as an egg-shell!

A train of gunpowder, an electric chain—nothing could be fired more suddenly and swiftly than this second illumination, and when we had got away, and gone upon a distant height, and looked towards it two hours afterwards, there it still stood, shining and glittering in the calm night like a jewel! Not a line of its proportions wanting, not an angle

blunted, not an atom of its radiance lost

The next night—Easter Monday—there was a great display of fireworks from the Castle of St Angelo We hired a room in an opposite house, and made our way to our places, in good time, through a dense mob of people choking up the square in front and all the avenues leading to it, and so loading the bridge by which the castle is approached that it seemed ready to sink into the rapid Tiber below. There are statues on this bridge (execrable works), and among them great vessels full of burning tow were placed—glaring strangely on the faces of the crowd, and not less strangely on the stone counterfeits above them

The show began with a tremendous discharge of cannon, and then, for twenty minutes or half an hour, the whole castle was one incessant sheet of fire and labyrinth of blazing wheels of every colour, size, and speed, while rockets streamed into the sky, not by ones or twos, or scores, but hundreds at a time The concluding burst—the Girandola—was like the blowing up into the air of the whole massive castle, without smoke or dust.

In half an hour afterwards the immense concourse had dispersed, the moon was looking calmly down upon her wrinkled image in the river, and half a dozen men and boys, with bits of lighted candle in their hands—moving here and there in search of anything worth having, that might have been dropped in the press—had the whole scene to themselves

By way of contrast we rode out into old ruined Rome, after all this firing and booming, to take our leave of the Coliseum. I had seen it by moonlight before (I never could get through a day without going back to it), but its tremendous solitude that night is past all telling. The ghostly pillars in the Forum, the Triumphal Arches of Old Emperors, those enormous masses of ruin which were once their palaces, the grass-grown mounds that mark the graves of ruined temples, the stones of the Via Sacra, smooth with the tread of feet in ancient Rome,—even these were dimmed, in their transcendent melancholy, by the dark ghost of its bloody holidays, erect and grim, haunting the old scene, despoiled by pillaging Popes and fighting Princes, but not laid, wringing wild hands of weed, and grass, and bramble, and lamenting to the night in every gap and broken arch—the shadow of its awful self, immovable!

As we lay down on the grass of the Campagna next day, on our way to Florence, hearing the larks sing, we saw that a little wooden cross had been erected on the spot where the poor Pilgrim Countess was murdered. So we piled some loose stones about it, as the beginning of a mound to her memory, and wondered if we should ever rest there again,

and look back at Rome

A RAPID DIORAMA.

WE are bound for Naples! And we cross the threshold of the Eternal City at yonder gate, the Gate of San Giovanni Laterano, where the two last objects that attract the notice of a departing visitor, and the two first objects that attract the notice of an arriving one, are a proud church and a decaying ruin—good emblems of Rome

Our way lies over the Campagna, which looks more solemn

on a bright blue day like this than beneath a darker skythe great extent of ruin being plainer to the eye, and the sunshine through the arches of the broken aqueducts showing other broken arches shining through them, in the melancholy distance When we have traversed it, and look back from Albano, its dark undulating surface lies below us like a stagnant lake, or like a broad dull Lethe flowing round the walls of Rome, and separating it from all the world ! often have the Legions, in triumphant march, gone glittering across that purple waste, so silent and unpeopled now! How often has the train of captives looked, with sinking hearts, upon the distant city, and beheld its population pouring out to hail the return of their conqueror! What riot, sensuality, and murder have run mad in the vast palaces, now heaps of brick and shattered marble! What glare of fires, and roar of popular tumult, and wail of pestilence and famine have come sweeping over the wild plain, where nothing is now heard but the wind, and where the solitary lizards gambol unmolested in the sun!

The train of wine-carts going into Rome, each driven by a shaggy peasant reclining beneath a little gipsy-fashioned canopy of sheepskin, is ended now, and we go toiling up into a higher country where there are trees. The next day brings us on the Pontine Marshes, wearily flat and lonesome, and overgrown with brushwood and swamped with water, but with a fine road made across them, shaded by a long, long avenue. Here and there we pass a solitary guardhouse, here and there a hovel, deserted, and walled up Some herdsmen loiter on the banks of the stream beside the road, and sometimes a flat-bottomed boat, towed by a man, comes rippling idly along it. A horseman passes occasionally, carrying a long guin crosswise on the saddle before him, and attended by fierce dogs, but there is nothing else astir save the wind and the shadows, until we come in sight of Terracina.

How blue and bright the sea, rolling below the windows of the inn so famous in robber stories! How picturesque the great crags and points of rock overhanging to-morrow's narrow road, where galley-slaves are working in the quarries above, and the sentinels who guard them lounge on the sea-

snore! All night there is the murmur of the sea beneath the stars, and, in the morning, just at daybreak, the prospect suddenly becoming expanded, as if by a miracle, reveals—in the far distance, across the sea there—Naples with its islands, and Vesuvius spouting fire! Within a quarter of an hour the whole is gone as if it were a vision in the clouds, and there is nothing but the sea and sky

The Neapolitan frontier crossed, after two hours' travelling, and the hungriest of soldiers and custom-house officers with difficulty appeased, we enter, by a gateless portal, into the first Neapolitan town—Fondi Take note of Fondi, in the

name of all that is wretched and beggarly

is one of the enigmas of the world

A filthy channel of mud and refuse meanders down the centre of the miserable street, fed by obscene rivulets that trickle from the abject houses. There is not a door, a window, or a shutter, not a roof, a wall, a post, or a pillar, in all Fondi, but is decayed, and crazy, and rotting away. The wretched history of the town, with all its sieges and pillages by Barbarossa and the rest, might have been acted last year. How the gaunt dogs that sneak about the miserable street come to be alive, and undevoured by the people,

A hollow-cheeked and scowling people they are! All beggars, but that's nothing Look at them as they gather round Some are too indolent to come downstairs, or are too wisely mistrustful of the stairs, perhaps, to venture, so stretch out their lean hands from upper windows, and howl, others come flocking about us, fighting and jostling one another, and demanding, incessantly, charity for the love of God, charity for the love of the Blessed Virgin, charity for the love of all the Saints A group of miserable children, almost naked, screaming forth the same petition, discover that they can see themselves reflected in the varnish of the carriage, and begin to dance and make grimaces, that they may have the pleasure of seeing their antics repeated in this A crippled idiot, in the act of striking one of them who drowns his clamorous demand for charity, observes his angry counterpart in the panel, stops short, and thrusting out his tongue, begins to wag his head and chatter The shrill cry raised at this awakens half a dozen wild creatures

wrapped in frowzy brown cloaks, who are lying on the church steps with pots and pans for sale These, scrambling up, approach, and beg defiantly "I am hungry Give me something Listen to me, Signore I am hungry!" Then a ghastly old woman, fearful of being too late, comes hobbling down the street, stretching out one hand, and scratching herself all the way with the other, and screaming, long before she can be heard, "Charity, charity! I'll go and pray for you directly, beautiful lady, if you'll give me charity!" Lastly, the members of a brotherhood for burying the dead hideously masked, and attired in shabby black robes, white at the skirts, with the splashes of many muddy winters; escorted by a dirty priest, and a congenial cross-bearercome hurrying past Surrounded by this motley concourse we move out of Fondi-bad bright eyes glaring at us, out of the darkness of every crazy tenement, like glistening fragments of its filth and putrefaction

A noble mountain-pass, with the ruins of a fort on a strong eminence, traditionally called the Fort of Fra Diavolo, the old town of Itri, like a device in pastry, built up, almost perpendicularly, on a hill, and approached by long steep flights of steps, beautiful Mola di Gaeta, whose wines, like those of Albano, have degenerated since the days of Horace, or his taste for wine was bad, which is not likely of one who enjoyed it so much and extolled it so well, another night upon the road at St Agata, a rest next day at Capua, which is picturesque, but hardly so seductive to a traveller now as the soldiers of Prætorian Rome were wont to find the ancient city of that name, a flat road among vines festooned and looped from tree to tree, and Mount Vesuvius close at hand at last !-- its cone and summit whitened with snow, and its smoke hanging over it, in the heavy atmosphere of the day, like a dense cloud So we go, rattling down hill, into Naples

A funeral is coming up the street, towards us—the body, on an open bier, borne on a kind of palanquin covered with a gay cloth of crimson and gold, the mourners, in white gowns and masks. If there be death abroad, life is well represented too, for all Naples would seem to be out of doors, and tearing to and fro in carriages. Some of these, the common Vetturino vehicles, are drawn by three horses

abreast, decked with smart trappings and great abundance of brazen ornaments, and always going very fast Not that their loads are light, for the smallest of them has at least six people inside, four in front, four or five more hanging on behind, and two or three more in a net or bag below the axle-tree, where they lie half-suffocated with mud and dust Exhibitors of Punch, buffo-singers with guitars, reciters of poetry, reciters of stories, a row of cheap exhibitions with clowns and showmen, drums and trumpets, painted cloths representing the wonders within, and admiring crowds assembled without, assist the whirl and bustle Ragged lazzaroni lie asleep in doorways, archways, and kennels, the gentry, gaily dressed, are dashing up and down in carriages on the Chiaja, or walking in the Public Gardens, and quiet letter-writers, perched behind their little desks and inkstands under the Portico of the Great Theatre of San Carlo in the public street, are waiting for clients

Here is a galley-slave in chains, who wants a letter written to a friend He approaches a clerkly-looking man sitting under the corner arch, and makes his bargain He has obtained permission of the sentinel who guards him, who stands near, leaning against the wall and cracking nuts The galley slave dictates in the ear of the letter-writer what he desires to say, and as he can't read writing, looks intently in his face, to read there whether he sets down faithfully what he is told After a time the galley-slave becomes discursiveincoherent The secretary pauses and rubs his chin galley-slave is voluble and energetic. The secretary, at length, catches the idea, and with the air of a man who knows how to word it, sets it down, stopping, now and then, to glance back at his text admiringly. The galley-slave is silent The soldier stoically cracks his nuts "Is there anything more to say?" inquires the letter-writer "No more" "Then listen, friend of mine" He reads it through The galley-slave is quite enchanted It is folded, and addressed, and given to him, and he pays the fee The secretary falls back indolently in his chair, and takes a book The galleyslave gathers up an empty sack The sentinel throws away a handful of nut-shells, shoulders his musket, and away they go together

Why do the beggars rap their chins constantly with their light hands when you look at them? Everything is done in pantomime in Naples, and that is the conventional sign for hunger A man who is quarrelling with another, yonder, lays the palm of his right hand on the back of his left, and shakes the two thumbs-expressive of a donkey's earswhereat his adversary is goaded to desperation Two people bargaining for fish, the buyer empties an imaginary waistcoat pocket when he is told the price, and walks away without a word, having thoroughly conveyed to the seller that he con-Two people in carriages, meeting, one siders it too dear touches his lips twice or thrice, holds up the five fingers of his right hand, and gives a horizontal cut in the air with the palm The other nods briskly, and goes his way He has been invited to a friendly dinner at half-past five o'clock, and will certainly come

All over Italy, a peculiar shake of the right hand from the wrist, with the forefinger stretched out, expresses a negative—the only negative beggars will ever understand But, in

Naples, those five fingers are a copious language

All this, and every other kind of outdoor life and stir, and macaroni eating at sunset, and flower-selling all day long, and begging and stealing everywhere and at all hours, you see upon the bright sea-shore, where the waves of the Bay sparkle merrily But, lovers and hunters of the picturesque, let us not keep too studiously out of view the miserable depravity, degradation, and wretchedness with which this gay Neapolitan life is inseparably associated! It is not well to find Saint Giles's so repulsive, and the Porta Capuana so attractive A pair of naked legs and a ragged red scarf do not make all the difference between what is interesting and what is coarse and odious Painting and poetizing for ever, if you will, the beauties of this most beautiful and lovely spot of earth, let us, as our duty, try to associate a new picturesque with some faint recognition of man's destiny and capabilities, more hopeful, I believe, among the ice and snow of the North Pole than in the sun and bloom of Naples

Capri—once made odious by the deified beast Tiberius—Ischia, Procida, and the thousand distant beauties of the Bay, he in the blue sea yonder, changing in the mist and

sunshine twenty times a day-now close at hand, now far off, now unseen The fairest country in the world is spread Whether we turn towards the Miseno shore of the splendid watery amphitheatre, and go by the Grotto of Posilipo to the Grotto del Cane and away to Baiæ, or take the other way, towards Vesuvius and Sorrento, it is one succession of delights In the last-named direction, where, over doors and archways, there are countless little images of San Gennaro, with his Canute's hand stretched out to check the fury of the Burning Mountain, we are carried pleasantly, by a railroad on the beautiful Sea Beach, past the town of Torre del Greco, built upon the ashes of the former town destroyed by an eruption of Vesuvius within a hundred years, and past the flat-roofed houses, granaries, and macaroni manufactories, to Castel-a-Mare, with its ruined castle, now inhabited by fishermen, standing in the sea upon a heap of rocks Here the railroad terminates, but hence we may nde on, by an unbroken succession of enchanting bays, and beautiful scenery, sloping from the highest summit of Saint Angelo, the highest neighbouring mountain, down to the water's edge—among vineyards, olive-trees, gardens of oranges and lemons, orchards, heaped-up rocks, green gorges in the hills—and by the bases of snow-covered heights, and through small towns with handsome, dark-haired women at the doors -and past delicious summer villas-to Sorrento, where the Poet Tasso drew his inspiration from the beauty surrounding Returning, we may climb the heights above Castel-a-Mare, and looking down among the boughs and leaves, see the crisp water glistening in the sun, and clusters of white houses in distant Naples, dwindling, in the great extent of prospect, down to dice. The coming back to the city, by the beach again, at sunset-with the glowing sea on one side, and the darkening mountain, with its smoke and flame, upon the other-is a sublime conclusion to the glory of the day

That church by the Porta Capuana—near the old fishermarket in the dirtiest quarter of dirty Naples, where the revolt of Massaniello began—is memorable for having been the scene of one of his earliest proclamations to the people, and is particularly remarkable for nothing else, unless it be its waxen and bejewelled Saint in a glass case, with two odd hands, or the enormous number of beggars who are constantly rapping their chins there, like a battery of castanets. The cathedral, with the beautiful door, and the columns of African and Egyptian granite that once ornamented the temple of Apollo, contains the famous sacred blood of San Gennaro or Januarius, which is preserved in two phials in a silver tabernacle, and miraculously liquifies three times a year, to the great admiration of the people. At the same moment, the stone (distant some miles) where the Saint suffered martyrdom becomes faintly red. It is said that the officiating priests turn faintly red also, sometimes, when these miracles occur.

The old, old men who live in hovels at the entrance of these ancient catacombs, and who, in their age and infirmity, seem waiting here to be buried themselves, are members of a curious body, called the Royal Hospital, who are the official attendants at funerals. Two of these old spectres totter away, with lighted tapers, to show the caverns of death, as unconcerned as if they were immortal. They were used as burying-places for three hundred years, and in one part is a large pit full of skulls and bones, said to be the sad remains of a great mortality occasioned by a plague. In the rest there is nothing but dust. They consist, chiefly, of great wide corridors and labyrinths hewn out of the rock. At the end of some of these long passages are unexpected glimpses of the daylight, shining down from above. It looks as ghastly and as strange—among the torches, and the dust, and the dark vaults—as if it, too, were dead and buried

The present burial-place lies out yonder, on a hill between the city and Vesuvius The old Campo Santo, with its three hundred and sixty-five pits, is only used for those who die in hospitals and prisons, and are unclaimed by their friends. The graceful new cemetery, at no great distance from it, though yet unfinished, has already many graves among its shrubs and flowers and airy colonnades. It might be reasonably objected elsewhere, that some of the tombs are meretricious and too fanciful, but the general brightness seems to justify it here, and Mount Vesuvius, separated from them by a lovely slope of ground, exalts and saddens the scene.

If it be solemn to behold from this new City of the Dead, with its dark smoke hanging in the clear sky, how much more awful and impressive is it, viewed from the ghostly ruins of

Herculaneum and Pompen !

Stand at the bottom of the great market-place of Pompen. and look up the silent streets, through the ruined temples of Tupiter and Isis, over the broken houses with their inmost sanctuaries open to the day, away to Mount Vesuvius, bright and snowy in the peaceful distance, and lose all count of time, and heed of other things, in the strange and melancholy sensation of seeing the Destroyed and the Destroyer making this quiet picture in the sun Then, ramble on, and see, at every turn, the little familiar tokens of human habitation and everyday pursuits—the chafing of the bucket-rope in the stone rim of the exhausted well, the track of carriage-wheels in the pavement of the street, the marks of drinking-vessels on the stone counter of the wine shop, the amphora in private cellars, stored away so many hundred years ago, and undisturbed to this hour,-all rendering the solitude and deadly lonesomeness of the place ten thousand times more solemn than if the volcano, in its fury, had swept the city from the earth, and sunk it in the bottom of the sea

After it was shaken by the earthquake which preceded the eruption, workmen were employed in shaping out, in stone, new ornaments for temples and other buildings that had suffered Here lies their work, outside the city gate, as if

they would return to-morrow

In the cellar of Diomede's house, where certain skeletons were found huddled together, close to the door, the impression of their bodies on the ashes hardened with the ashes, and became stamped and fixed there, after they had shrunk, inside, to scanty bones. So, in the theatre of Herculaneum, a comic mask, floating on the stream when it was hot and liquid, stamped its mimic features in it as it hardened into stone, and now, it turns upon the stranger the fantastic look it turned upon the audiences in that same theatre two thousand years ago

Next to the wonder of going up and down the streets, and in and out of the houses, and traversing the secret chambers of the temples of a religion that has vanished from the earth, and finding so many fresh traces of remote antiquity—ås if the course of Time had been stopped after this desolation, and there had been no nights and days, months, years, and centuries since—nothing is more impressive and terrible than the many evidences of the searching nature of the ashes, as bespeaking their irresistible power, and the impossibility of escaping them. In the wine-cellars, they forced their way into the earthen vessels, displacing the wine, and choking them, to the brim, with dust. In the tombs, they forced the ashes of the dead from the funeral urns, and rained new ruin even into them. The mouths, and eyes, and skulls of all the skeletons were stuffed with this terrible hail. In Herculaneum, where the flood was of a different and a heavier kind, it rolled in, like a sea. Imagine a deluge of water turned to marble at its height, and that is what is called "the lava" here

Some workmen were digging the gloomy well on the brink of which we now stand looking down, when they came on some of the stone benches of the theatre—those steps (for such they seem) at the bottom of the excavation—and found the buried city of Herculaneum Presently, going down, with lighted torches, we are perplexed by great walls of monstrous thickness rising up between the benches, shutting out the stage, obtruding their shapeless forms in absurd places, confusing the whole plan, and making it a disordered dream We cannot, at first, beheve, or picture to ourselves, that This came rolling in and drowned the city, and that all that is not here has been cut away, by the axe, like solid stone But this perceived and understood, the horror and oppression of its presence are indescribable

Many of the paintings on the walls in the roofless chambers of both cities, or carefully removed to the museum at Naples, are as fresh and plain as if they had been executed yesterday. Here are subjects of still life, as provisions, dead game, bottles, glasses, and the like, familiar classical stories, or mythological fables, always forcibly and plainly told, conceits of cupids, quarrelling, sporting, working at trades, theatrical rehearsals, poets reading their productions to their friends, inscriptions chalked upon the walls, political squibs, advertisements, rough drawings byschoolboys—everything to people

and restore the ancient cities, in the fancy of their wondering visitor. Furniture, too, you see, of every kind—lamps, tables, couches, vessels for eating, drinking, and cooking, workmen's tools, surgical instruments, tickets for the theatre, pieces of moriey, personal onaments, bunches of keys found clenched in the grasp of skeletons, helmets of guards and warriors, little household bells, yet musical with their old domestic tones

The least among these objects lends its aid to swell the interest of Vesuvius and invest it with a perfect fascination The looking, from either ruined city, into the neighbouring grounds, overgrown with beautiful vines and luxuriant trees, and remembering that house upon house, temple on temple, building after building, and street after street are still lying underneath the roots of all the quiet cultivation, waiting to be turned up to the light of day, is something so wonderful, so full of mystery, so captivating to the imagination, that one would think it would be paramount, and yield to nothing To nothing but Vesuvius, but the mountain is the genius of the scene From every indication of the ruin it has worked, we look, again, with an absorbing interest to where its smoke is rising up into the sky. It is beyond us, as we thread the ruined streets, above us, as we stand upon the ruined walls, we follow it through every vista of broken columns, as we wander through the empty courtyards of the houses, and through the garlandings and interlacings of every wanton vine Turning away to Pæstum yonder, to see the awful structures built, the least aged of them, hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, and standing yet, erect in lonely majesty, upon the wild, malaria-blighted plain, we watch Vesuvius as it disappears from the prospect, and watch for it again, on our return, with the same thrill of interestas the doom and destiny of all this beautiful country, biding its terrible time

It is very warm in the sun on this early spring day, when we return from Pæstum, but very cold in the shade, insomuch, that, although we may lunch pleasantly at noon in the open air, by the gate of Pompeii, the neighbouring rivulet supplies thick ice for our wine. But the sun is shining brightly; there is not a cloud or speck of vapour in the

whole blue sky, looking down upon the Bay of Naples, and the moon will be at the full to-night. No matter that the snow and ice lie thick upon the summit of Vesuvius, or that we have been on foot all day at Pompen, or that croakers maintain that strangers should not be on the mountain by night in such an unusual season Let us take advantage of the fine weather, make the best of our way to Resina, the little village at the foot of the mountain, prepare ourselves, as well as we can, on so short a notice, at the guide's house, ascend at once, and have sunset half-way up, moonlight at the top, and midnight to come down in !

At four o'clock in the afternoon, there is a terrible uproar in the little stable-yard of Signor Salvatore, the recognized head guide, with the gold band round his cap, and thirty under guides, who are all scuffling and screaming at once, are preparing half a dozen saddled ponies, three litters, and some stout staves for the journey Every one of the thirty quarrels with the other twenty-nine, and frightens the six ponies, and as much of the village as can possibly squeeze itself into the little stable-yard participates in the tumult, and gets trodden on by the cattle

After much violent skirmishing, and more noise than would suffice for the storming of Naples, the procession The head guide, who is liberally paid for all the attendants, rides a little in advance of the party, the other thirty guides proceed on foot Eight go forward with the litters that are to be used by-and-by, and the remaining

two-and-twenty beg

We ascend, gradually, by stony lanes like rough broad flights of stairs, for some time At length, we leave these, and the vineyards on either side of them, and emerge upon a bleak, bare region, where the lava lies confusedly in enormous rusty masses, as if the earth had been ploughed up by burning thunderbolts And now we halt to see the sun set. The change that falls upon the dreary region, and on the whole mountain, as its red light fades, and the night comes on-and the unutterable solemnity and dreariness that reign around, who that has witnessed it can ever forget!

It is dark when, after winding for some time over the broken ground, we arrive at the foot of the cone, which is

extremely steep, and seems to rise almost perpendicularly from the spot where we dismount. The only light is reflected from the snow-deep, hard, and white-with which the cone is covered. It is now intensely cold, and the air is piercing The thirty-one have brought no torches, knowing that the moon will rise before we reach the top Two of the litters are devoted to the two ladies, the third, to a rather heavy gentleman from Naples, whose hospitality and good-nature have attached him to the expedition, and determined him to assist in doing the honours of the mountain The rather heavy gentleman is carried by fifteen men, each of the ladies by half-a-dozen We who walk make the best use of our staves, and so the whole party begin to labour upward over the snow—as if they were toiling to the summit of an antediluvian Twelfth-cake

We are a long time toiling up, and the head guide looks oddly about him when one of the company-not an Italian, though an habitue of the mountain for many years, whom we will call, for our present purpose, Mr Pickle of Porticisuggests that, as it is freezing hard, and the usual footing of ashes is covered by the snow and ice, it will surely be difficult to descend But the sight of the litters above, tilting up and down, and jerking from this side to that, as the bearers continually slip and tumble, diverts our attention—more especially as the whole length of the rather heavy gentleman is, at that moment, presented to us alarmingly foreshortened. with his head downwards

The rising of the moon soon afterwards revives the flagging spirits of the bearers Stimulating each other with their usual watchword, "Courage, friend! It macaroni!" they press on gallantly for the summit It is to eat

From tingeing the top of the snow above us with a band of light, and pouring it in a stream through the valley below, while we have been ascending in the dark, the moon soon lights the whole white mountain side, and the broad sea down below, and tiny Naples in the distance, and every village in the country round. The whole prospect is in this lovely state when we come upon the platform on the mountain top-the region of Fire-an exhausted crater formed of great masses of gigantic cinders, like blocks of stone from

some tremendous waterfall burnt up, from every chink and crevice of which hot, sulphurous smoke is pouring out; while, from another conical-shaped hill, the present crater, rising abruptly from this platform at the end, great sheets of fire are streaming forth, reddening the night with flame, blackening it with smoke, and spotting it with red-hot stones and cinders, that fly up into the air like feathers, and fall down like lead What words can paint the gloom and grandeur of this scene!

grandeur of this scene!

The broken ground, the smoke, the sense of suffocation from the sulphur, the fear of falling down through the crevices in the yawning ground, the stopping every now and then for somebody who is missing in the dark (for the dense smoke now obscures the moon), the intolerable noise of the thirty, and the hoarse roaring of the mountain, make it a scene of such confusion, at the same time, that we reel again But, dragging the ladies through it, and across another exhausted crater to the foot of the present volcano, we approach close to it on the windy side, and then sit down among the hot ashes at its foot, and look up in silence, faintly estimating the action that is going on within from its being full a hundred feet higher at this minute than it was six weeks ago

There is something in the fire and roar that generates an irresistible desire to get nearer to it. We cannot rest long without starting off, two of us, on our hands and knees, accompanied by the head guide, to climb to the brim of the flaming crater, and try to look in. Meanwhile the thirty yell, as with one voice, that it is a dangerous proceeding, and call to us to come back, frightening the rest of the party out of their wits.

What with their noise, and what with the trembling of the thin crust of ground, that seems about to open underneath our feet and plunge us in the burning gulf below (which is the real danger, if there be any), and what with the flashing of the fire in our faces, and the shower of red-hot ashes that is raining down, and the choking smoke and sulphur, we may well feel giddy and irrational, like drunken men But we contrive to climb up to the brim, and look down for a moment into the hell of boiling fire below. Then we all three come rolling down—blackened, and singed, 13 and

scorched, and hot and giddy, and each with his dress alight m half a dozen places

You have read a thousand times that the usual way of descending is by sliding down the ashes, which, forming a gradually-increasing ledge below the feet, prevent too rapid a descent. But when we have crossed the two exhausted craters on our way back, and are come to this precipitous place, there is (as Mr Pickle has foretold) no vestige of ashes to be seen, the whole being a smooth sheet of ice

In this dilemma, ten or a dozen of the guides cautiously join hands and make a chain of men, of whom the foremost beat, as well as they can, a rough track with their sticks, down which we prepare to follow. The way being fearfully steep, and none of the party, even of the thirty, being able to keep their feet for six paces together, the ladies are taken out of their litters and placed each between two careful persons, while others of the thirty hold by their skirts, to prevent their falling forward—a necessary precaution tending to the immediate and hopeless dilapidation of their apparel. The rather heavy gentleman is abjured to leave his litter too, and be escorted in a similar manner, but he resolves to be brought down as he was brought up, on the principle that his fifteen bearers are not likely to tumble all at once, and that he is safer so than trusting to his own legs

In this order we begin the descent—sometimes on foot, sometimes shuffling on the ice, always proceeding much more quietly and slowly than on our upward way, and constantly alarmed by the falling among us of somebody from behind, who endangers the footing of the whole party, and clings pertinaciously to anybody's ankles It is impossible for the litter to be in advance, too, as the track has to be made, and its appearance behind us, overhead-with some one or other of the bearers always down, and the rather heavy gentleman with his legs always in the air-is very threatening and frightful We have gone on thus a very little way-painfully and anxiously, but quite merrily, and regarding it as a great success—and have all fallen several times, and have all been stopped, somehow or other, as we were sliding away, when Mr Pickle of Portici, in the act of remarking on these uncommon circumstances as quite beyond his experience, stumbles, falls, disengages himself, witl quick presence of mind, from those about him, plunges awai head-foremost, and rolls over and over down the whole sur face of the cone!

Sickening as it is to look and be so powerless to help him, I see him there in the moonlight—I have had such a dream often-skimming over the white ice like a cannon-ball Al most at the same moment there is a cry from behind, and a man who has carried a light basket of spare cloaks on his head comes rolling past at the same frightful speed, closely followed by a boy At this climax of the chapter of accidents, the remaining eight-and-twenty vociferate to that degree that a pack of wolves would be music to them!

Giddy, and bloody, and a mere bundle of rags, is Pickle of Portici when we reach the place where we dismounted, and where the horses are waiting, but (thank God!) sound in hmb! And never are we likely to be more glad to see a man alive and on his feet than to see him now-making light of it too, though sorely bruised and in great pain The boy is brought into the Hermitage on the Mountain while we are at supper, with his head tied up, and the man is heard of some hours afterwards He, too, is bruised and stunned, but has broken no bones—the snow having, fortunately, covered all the larger blocks of rock and stone, and rendered them harmless

After a cheerful meal, and a good rest before a blazing fire, we again take horse, and continue our descent to Salvatore's house-very slowly, by reason of our bruised friend being hardly able to keep the saddle or endure the pain of motion Though it is so late at night, or early in the morning, all the people of the village are waiting about the little stable-yard when we arrive, and looking up the road by which we are expected Our appearance is hailed with a great clamour of tongues and a general sensation for which, in our modesty, we are somewhat at a loss to account, until, turning into the yard, we find that one of a party of French gentlemen who were on the mountain at the same time is lying on some straw in the stable with a broken limb, looking like Death, and suffering great torture, and that we were confidently supposed to have encountered some worse accident.

So, "well returned, and Heaven be praised!" as the cheerful Vetturino, who has borne us company all the way from Pisa, says with all his heart. And away with his ready horses into sleeping Naples

It wakes again to Policinelli and pickpockets, buffo-singers and beggars, rags, puppets, flowers, brightness, dirt, and universal degradation, airing its harlequin suit in the sunshine next day and every day, singing, starving, dancing, gaming on the sea-shore, and leaving all labour to the burn-

ing mountain, which is ever at its work

Our English dilettanti would be very pathetic on the subject of the national taste if they could hear an Italian opera half as badly sung in England as we may hear the Foscari performed to-night in the splendid theatre of San Carlo But for astonishing truth and spirit in seizing and embodying the real life about it, the shabby little San Carlino theatre—the rickety house one story high, with a staring picture outside, down among the drums and trumpets, and the tumblers, and the lady conjurer—is without a rival anywhere

There is one extraordinary feature in the real life of Naples at which we may take a glance before we go—the lotteries

They prevail in most parts of Italy, but are particularly obvious in their effects and influences here. They are drawn every Saturday. They bring an immense revenue to the government, and diffuse a taste for gambling among the poorest of the poor which is very comfortable to the coffers of the state, and very ruinous to themselves. The lowest stake is one grain—less than a farthing. One hundred numbers—from one to a hundred inclusive—are put into a box. Five are drawn. Those are the prizes. I buy three numbers. If one of them come up, I win a small prize. If two, some hundreds of times my stake. If three, three thousand five hundred times my stake. I stake (or play, as they call it) what I can upon my numbers, and buy what numbers. I please. The amount I play I pay at the lottery office where I purchase the ticket, and it is stated on the ticket itself.

Every lottery office keeps a printed book—a Universal Lottery Diviner—where every possible accident and circumstance is provided for, and has a number against it For instance, let us take two carlini—about sevenpence On-our way to the lottery office we run against a black man When we get there, we say gravely, "The Diviner" It is handed over the counter as a serious matter of business We look at "black man"—such a number "Give its that" We look at "running against a person in the street" "Give us that" We look at the name of the street itself "Give us that" Now we have our three numbers

If the roof of the theatre of San Carlo were to fall in, so many people would play upon the numbers attached to such an accident in the Diviner that the government would soon close those numbers, and decline to run the risk of losing any more upon them. This often happens. Not long ago, when there was a fire in the king's palace, there was such a desperate run on "fire," and "king," and "palace," that further stakes on the numbers attached to those words in the Golden Book were forbidden. Every accident or event is supposed by the ignorant populace to be a revelation to the beholder, or party concerned, in connection with the lottery Certain people who have a talent for dreaming fortunately are much sought after, and there are some priests who are constantly favoured with visions of the lucky numbers.

I heard of a horse running away with a man, and dashing him down dead at the corner of a street. Pursuing the horse with incredible speed was another man, who ran so fast that he came up immediately after the accident. He threw himself upon his knees beside the unfortunate rider, and clasped his hand with an expression of the wildest grief. "If you have life," he said, "speak one word to me! If you have one gasp of breath left, mention your age for Heaven's sake,

that I may play that number in the lottery"

It is four o'clock in the afternoon, and we may go to see our lottery drawn. The ceremony takes place every Saturday in the Tribunale, or Court of Justice—this singular, earthy-smelling room or gallery, as mouldy as an old cellar, and as damp as a dungeon. At the upper end is a platform with a large horse-shoe table upon it, and a President and Council sitting round—all Judges of the Law. The man on the little stool behind the President is the Capo Lazzarone—

a kind of tribune of the people, appointed on their behalf to see 'that all is fairly conducted—attended by a few personal friends. A ragged, swarthy fellow he is, with long matted hair hanging down all over his face, and covered from head to foot with most unquestionably genuine dirt. All the body of the room is filled with the commonest of the Neapolitan people, and between them and the platform, guarding the steps leading to the latter, is a small body of soldiers

There is some delay in the arrival of the necessary number of judges, during which the box in which the numbers are being placed is a source of the deepest interest. When the box is full, the boy who is to draw the numbers out of it becomes the prominent feature of the proceedings. He is already dressed for his part, in a tight brown holland coat with only one (the left) sleeve to it, which leaves his right arm bare to the shoulder, ready for plunging down into the

mysterious chest

During the hush and whisper that pervade the room, all eyes are turned on this young minister of fortune. People begin to inquire his age, with a view to the next lottery, and the number of his brothers and sisters, and the age of his father and mother, and whether he has any moles or pimples upon him, and where, and how many,—when the arrival of the last judge but one (a little old man, universally dreaded as possessing the Evil Eye) makes a slight diversion, and would occasion a greater one but that he is immediately deposed, as a source of interest, by the officiating priest, who advances gravely to his place, followed by a very dirty little boy carrying his sacred vestments and a pot of Holy Water.

Here is the last judge come at last, and now he takes his

place at the horse-shoe table

There is a murmur of irrepressible agitation. In the midst of it the priest puts his head into the sacred vestments, and pulls the same over his shoulders. Then he says a silent prayer, and dipping a brush into the pot of Holy Water, sprinkles it over the box and over the boy, and gives them a double-barrelled blessing, which the box and the boy are both hoisted on the table to receive. The boy remaining on the table, the box is now carried round the front of the platform by an attendant who holds it up and shakes it lustily

all the time—seeming to say, like the conjurer, "There is no deception, ladies and gentlemen, keep your eyes upon me,

if you please !"

At last the box is set before the boy, and the boy, first holding up his naked arm and open hand, dives down into the hole (it is made like a ballot-box) and pulls out a num ber, which is rolled up round something hard, like a bonbon This he hands to the judge next him, who unrolls a little bit, and hands it to the President, next to whom he sits. The President unrolls it very slowly. The Capo Lazzarone leans over his shoulder. The President holds it up unrolled to the Capo Lazzarone. The Capo Lazzarone, looking at it eagerly, cries out, in a shrill loud voice, "Sessanta-due!" (sixty-two), expressing the two upon his fingers as he calls it out. Alas! the Capo Lazzarone himself has not staked on sixty-two. His face is very long, and his eyes roll wildly

As it happens to be a favourite number, however, it is pretty well received, which is not always the case. They are all drawn with the same ceremony, omitting the blessing. One blessing is enough for the whole multiplication-table. The only new incident in the proceedings is the gradually-deepening intensity of the change in the Capo Lazzarone, who has evidently speculated to the very utmost extent of his means, and who, when he sees the last number and finds that it is not one of his, clasps his hands and raises his eyes to the ceiling before proclaiming it, as though remonstrating, in a secret agony, with his patron saint for having committed so gross a breach of confidence. I hope the Capo Lazzarone may not desert him for some other member of the calendar, but he seems to threaten it

Where the winners may be, nobody knows They certainly are not present—the general disappointment filling one with pity for the poor people. They look, when we stand aside observing them in their passage through the courtyard down below, as miserable as the prisoners in the jail (it forms a part of the building) who are peeping down upon them from between their bars, or as the fragments of human heads which are still dangling in chains outside, in memory of the good old times when their owners were strung up there for the popular edification.

Away from Naples in a glorious sunrise, by the road to Capua, and then on a three days' journey along by-roads, that we may see, on the way, the monastery of Monte Cassino, which is perched on the steep and lofty hill above the little town of San Germano, and is lost on a misty morning in the clouds

So much the better for the deep sounding of its bell, which, as we go winding up, on mules, towards the convent, is heard mysteriously in the still air, while nothing is seen but the grey mist, moving solemnly and slowly, like a funeral procession. Behold at length the shadowy pile of building close before us—its grey walls and towers dimly seen, though so near and so vast, and the raw vapour roll-

ing through its cloisters heavily

There are two black shadows walking to and fro in the quadrangle, near the statues of the Patron Saint and his sister, and hopping on behind them, in and out of the old arches, is a raven, croaking in answer to the bell, and uttering, at intervals, the purest Tuscan. How like a Jesuit he looks! There never was a sly and stealthy fellow so at home as is this raven, standing now at the refectory door, with his head on one side, and pretending to glance another way, while he is scrutinizing the visitors keenly, and listening with fixed attention. What a dull-headed monk the porter becomes in comparison!

"He speaks like us," says the porter—"quite as plainly."
Quite as plainly, porter Nothing could be more expressive
than his reception of the peasants who are entering the gate
with baskets and burdens There is a roll in his eye, and a
chuckle in his throat, which should qualify him to be chosen
Superior of an Order of Ravens He knows all about it
"It's all right," he says "We know what we know Come

along, good people Glad to see you !"

How was this extraordinary structure ever built in such a situation, where the labour of conveying the stone, and iron, and marble so great a height must have been prodigious? "Caw!" says the raven, welcoming the peasants How, being despoiled by plunder, fire, and earthquake, has it risen from its ruins, and been again made what we now see it, with its church so sumptuous and magnificent?

"Caw!" says the raven, welcoming the peasants These people have a miserable appearance, and (as usual). are densely ignorant, and all beg, while the monks are chanting in the chapel "Caw!" says the raven, "Cuckoo!"

So we leave him, chuckling and rolling his eye at the convent gate, and wind slowly down again through the cloud At last, emerging from it, we come in sight of the village far below, and the flat green country intersected by rivulets; which is pleasant and fresh to see after the obscurity and haze of the convent—no disrespect to the raven, or the holy friars

Away we go again, by muddy 10ads, and through the most shattered and tattered of villages, where there is not a whole window among all the houses, or a whole garment among all the peasants, or the least appearance of anything to eat in any of the wretched hucksters' shops The women wear a bright red bodice laced before and behind, a white skirt, and the Neapolitan head-dress of square folds of linen, primitively meant to carry loads on The men and children wear anything they can get The soldiers are as dirty and rapacious as the dogs The inns are such hobgoblin places, that they are infinitely more attractive and amusing than the best hotels in Paris Here is one near Valmontone (that is Valmontone, the round, walled town on the mount opposite), which is approached by a quagmire almost knee-deep. There is a wild colonnade below, and a dark yard full of empty stables and lofts, and a great long kitchen with a great long bench and a great long form, where a party of travellers, with two priests among them, are crowding round the fire while their supper is cooking Above stairs, is a rough brick gallery to sit in, with very little windows with very small patches of knotty glass in them, and all the doors that open from it (a dozen or two) off their hinges, and a bare board on trestles for a table, at which thirty people might dine easily, and a fireplace large enough in itself for a breakfast-parlour, where, as the fagots blaze and crackle, they illuminate the ugliest and grimmest of faces, drawn in charcoal on the whitewashed chimney-sides by previous travellers There is a flaring country lamp on the table, and, hovering about it, scratching her thick, black hair continually, a yellow

dwarf of a woman, who stands on tiptoe to arrange the hatchet knives, and takes a flying leap to look into the water-jug. The beds in the adjoining rooms are of the liveliest kind. There is not a solitary scrap of looking-glass in the house, and the washing apparatus is identical with the cooking utensils. But the yellow dwarf sets on the table a good flask of excellent wine, holding a quart at least, and produces, among half a dozen other dishes, two-thirds of a roasted kid, smoking hot. She is as good-humoured, too, as dirty, which is saying a great deal. So here's long life to her, in the flask of wine,

and prosperity to the establishment

Rome gained and left behind, and with it the Pilgrims who are now repairing to their own homes again-each with his scallop shell and staff, and soliciting alms for the love of God—we come, by a fair country, to the falls of Terni, where the whole Velino river dashes headlong from a rocky height, amidst shining spray and rainbows Perugia, stongly fortified by art and nature, on a lofty eminence, rising abruptly from the plain, where purple mountains mingle with the distant sky, is glowing, on its market day, with radiant colours They set off its sombre but rich Gothic buildings admir-The pavement of its market-place is strewn with country goods All along the steep hill leading from the town, under the town wall, there is a noisy fair of calves. lambs, pigs, horses, mules, and oxen Fowls, geese, and turkeys flutter vigorously among their very hoofs, and buyers, sellers, and spectators, clustering everywhere, block up the road as we come shouting down upon them

Suddenly there is a ringing sound among our horses. The driver stops them. Sinking in his saddle, and casting up his eyes to heaven, he delivers this apostrophe, "O Jove Om-

nipotent! here is a horse has lost his shoe!"

Notwithstanding the tremendous nature of this accident, and the utterly forlorn look and gesture (impossible in any one but an Italian Vetturino) with which it is announced, it is not long in being repaired by a mortal farrier, by whose assistance we reach Castiglione the same night, and Arezzo next day. Mass is, of course, performing in its fine cathedral, where the sun shines in among the clustered pillars through rich stained-glass windows—half revealing, half concealing

the kneeling figures on the pavement, and striking out paths

of spotted light in the long aisles

But how much beauty of another kind is here, when, on a fair, clear morning, we look, from the summit of a' hill, on Florence! See where it lies before us in a sun-lighted valley, bright with the winding Arno, and shut in by swelling hills, its domes, and towers, and palaces rising from the rich country in a glittering heap, and shining in the sun like gold!

Magnificently stern and sombre are the streets of beautiful Florence, and the strong old piles of building make such heaps of shadow, on the ground and in the river, that there is another and a different city, of rich forms and fancies, always lying at our feet Prodigious palaces, constructed for defence, with small distrustful windows heavily barred. and walls of great thickness formed of huge masses of rough stone, frown, in their old sulky state, on every street. In the midst of the city—in the Piazza of the Grand Duke, adorned with beautiful statues and the fountain of Neptune -rises the Palazzo Vecchio, with its enormous overhanging battlements, and the Great Tower that watches over the whole town In its courtyard—worthy of the Castle of Otranto in its ponderous gloom—is a massive staircase that the heaviest wagon and the stoutest team of horses might be driven up Within it is a Great Saloon, faded and tarnished in its stately decorations, and mouldering by grains, but recording yet, in pictures on its walls, the triumphs of the Medici and the wars of the old Florentine people prison is hard by, in an adjacent courtyard of the building -a foul and dismal place, where some men are shut up close, in small cells like ovens, and where others look through bars and beg, where some are playing draughts, and some are talking to their friends, who smoke, the while. to purify the air, and some are buying wine and fruit of women-vendors, and all are squalid, dirty, and vile to look at "They are merry enough, Signore," says the jailer "They are all blood-stained here," he adds, indicating, with his hand, three-fourths of the whole building Before the hour is out, an old man, eighty years of age, quarrelling over a bargain with a young girl of seventeen, stabs her dead,

in the market-place, full of bright flowers, and is brought in

prisoner, to swell the number

Among the four old bridges that span the river, the Ponte Vecchio—that bridge which is covered with the shops of jewellers and goldsmiths—is a most enchanting feature in the scene. The space of one house, in the centre, being left open, the view beyond is shown as in a frame, and that precious glimpse of sky, and water, and rich buildings, shining so quietly among the huddled roofs and gables on the bridge, is exqueste. Above it the Gallery of the Grand Duke crosses the river. It was built to connect the two Great Palaces by a secret passage, and it takes its jealous course among the streets and houses, with true despotism—going where it lists, and spurning every obstacle away, before it

The Grand Duke has a worthier secret passage through the streets, in his black robe and hood, as a member of the Compagnia della Misericordia, which brotherhood includes all ranks of men. If an accident take place, their office is, to raise the sufferer, and bear him tenderly to the Hospital If a fire break out, it is one of their functions to repair to the spot, and render their assistance and protection. It is also among their commonest offices to attend and console the sick, and they neither receive money, nor eat, nor drink, in any house they visit for this purpose. Those who are on duty for the time are called together, on a moment's notice, by the tolling of the great bell of the Tower, and it is said that the Grand Duke has been seen, at this sound, to rise from his seat at table, and quietly withdraw to attend the summons.

In this other large Piazza, where an irregular kind of market is held, and stores of old iron and other small merchandise are set out on stalls, or scattered on the pavement, are grouped together the Cathedral with its great Dome, the beautiful Italian Gothic Tower the Campanile, and the Baptistery with its wrought bronze doors. And here, a small untrodden square in the pavement, is "the Stone of Dante," where, so runs the story) he was used to bring his stool, and sit in contemplation. I wonder, was he ever, in his bitter exile, withheld from cursing the very stones in the streets of Flore.

ence the ungrateful, by any kind remembrance of this old musing-place, and its association with gentle thoughts of little Beatrice?

The chapel of the Medici, the Good and Bad Angels of Florence, the church of Santa Croce, where Michael Angelo lies buried, and where every stone in the cloisfers is eloquent on great men's deaths, innumerable churches, often masses of unfinished heavy brickwork externally, but solemn and serene within, arrest our lingering steps, in strolling through

the city

In keeping with the tombs among the cloisters, is the Museum of Natural History, famous through the world for its preparations in wax, beginning with models of leaves, seeds, plants, inferior animals, and gradually ascending, through separate organs of the human frame, up to the whole structure of that wonderful creation, exquisitely presented, as in recent death. Few admonitions of our frail mortality can be more solemn and more sad, or strike so home upon the heart, as the counterfeits of Youth and Beauty that are lying there, upon their beds, in their last sleep

Beyond the walls, the whole sweet Valley of the Arno, the convent at Fiesole, the Tower of Galileo, Boccaccio's house, old villas and retreats—innumerable spots of interest, all glowing in a landscape of surpassing beauty steeped in the richest light—are spread before us Returning from so much brightness, how solemn and how grand the streets again, with their great, dark, mournful palaces, and many legends—not of siege, and war, and might, and Iron Hand alone, but of the

triumphant growth of peaceful Arts and Sciences 1

What light is shed upon the world, at this day, from amidst these rugged Palaces of Florence! Here, open to all comers, in their beautiful and calm retreats, the ancient Sculptors are immortal, side by side with Michael Angelo, Canova, Titian, Rembrandt, Raphael, Poets, Historians, Philosophers—those illustrious men of history, beside whom its crowned heads and harnessed warriors show so poor and small, and are so soon forgotten. Here, the imperishable part of noble minds survives, placid and equal, when strongholds of assault and defence are overthrown, when the tyranny of the many, or

the few, or both, is but a tale, when Pride and Power are so much cloistered dust. The fire within the stern streets, and among the massive Palaces and Towers, kindled by rays from heaven, is still burning brightly, when the flickering of war is extinguished and the household fires of generations have decayed, as thousands upon thousands of faces, rigid with the strife and passion of the hour, have faded out of the old Squares and public haunts, while the nameless Florentine Lady, preserved from oblivion by a Painter's hand, yet lives on, in enduring grace and youth

Let us look back on Florence while we may, and when its shining Dome is seen no more, go travelling through cheerful Tuscany, with a bright remembrance of it, for Italy will be the fairer for the recollection The summer time being come, and Genoa, and Milan, and the Lake of Como lying far behind us, and we resting at Faido, a Swiss village, near the awful rocks and mountains, the everlasting snows, and roaring cataracts of the Great Saint Gothard-hearing the Italian tongue for the last time on this journey-let us part from Italy, with all its miseries and wrongs, affectionately, in our admiration of the beauties, natural and artificial, of which it is full to overflowing, and in our tenderness towards a people, naturally well-disposed, and patient, and sweettempered Years of neglect, oppression, and misrule have been at work, to change their nature and reduce their spirit, miserable jealousies, fomented by petty Princes to whom union was destruction, and division strength, have been a canker at the root of their nationality, and have barbarized their language, but the good that was in them ever, is in them yet, and a noble people may be, one day, raised up from these ashes Let us entertain that hope! And let us not remember Italy the less regardfully, because, in every fragment of her fallen Temples, and every stone of her deserted Palaces and Prisons, she helps to inculcate the lesson that the wheel of Time is rolling for an end, and that the world is, in all great essentials, better, gentler, more forbearing, and more hopeful as it rolls!

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